

**Baudelaire's Rewriting of Poe: A Para-Textual Critique of
the Translations**

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Abstract

In this thesis a critique of Baudelaire's translation of Poe's short fiction will be presented by applying the method of Translation Criticism proposed by Antoine Berman in *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne* (Berman 1995). The post-structuralist theory of meaning which underlies Berman's approach is elaborated, and its appropriateness for the description of translation products is explained by its perspective on translation as a form of rewriting, and by its recognition of the importance of para-text as a tool in Translation Criticism. The specific questions which Berman proposes for Translation Criticism are then applied to an analysis of the *translatio* of Poe's short fiction by Baudelaire. The story of these translations is first told through a series of pre-analytical enquiries which form a hermeneutic construct of data concerning Baudelaire's position as a language user and as a (re)writer, his stance as a translator, his project for the translation of Poe and the literary and translational horizon in which he was working. These pre-analytical enquiries are followed up by a detailed analysis of two stories in translation, "La chute de la Maison Usher" and "Le scarabée d'or," which are assessed and compared to the originals in terms of the different readings which they produce. The divergences that can be observed are explained, whenever possible, with the data gathered during the pre-analytical enquiries. Baudelaire's translation of "The Gold Bug" is also compared with a contemporary translation by Amédée Pichot, in order to help place the Baudelaire translations in their nineteenth-century context. This para-textual critique of the Baudelaire translations thus tells the story of these translations at a level of fine detail which provides a solid basis for the broader theoretical conclusions which will be drawn, including an assessment of the value of Baudelaire's texts in the 21st century.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed entirely by myself, Ineke Wallaert, that the work is entirely my own, and that none of it has been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandfather, Marcellus Wallaert, with gratitude and respect as always.

Words of Thanks

I wish to express my sincere thanks to my supervisor, Prof. John E. Joseph, for his sage guidance and advice on this thesis. My thanks also go to Dr. Dayan for reading and counselling me on Chapters Four to Seven, and Prof. D'Hulst for reading and advising me on Chapters Four, Five and Six. Lastly, thanks to my family (Papa, Mama, Richard, Pierre, Maria and Annik) for their material and moral support, and most of all to David, for having lived through the best part of this work with unflinching patience and customary good cheer.

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General Introduction

The aim of the present thesis is to give a complete description, assessment and evaluation of Charles Baudelaire's translations of the short fiction of Edgar Allan Poe, and to produce a detailed analysis of two of these translations. A number of factors have prompted this project: firstly, the knowledge that no-one has retranslated any of the stories which Baudelaire translated in the 1850s, and that these translations thus continue to monopolise the reading of Poe in France. Secondly, a pilot study on Baudelaire's "Le scarabée d'or" (his translation of Poe's "The Gold Bug") showed significant differences between the readings yielded by the original and the translation in question, and revealed the need for a more detailed analysis. Thirdly, the sparseness of critical assessments of these translations, and the subjective nature of the critiques that do exist, also lead to carrying out this study.

When it came to selecting an approach to describe, assess and evaluate these translations, Antoine Berman's guiding principles in Translation Criticism naturally presented themselves as the most appropriate basis for this exercise. However, in *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne* (Berman 1995), Berman does not make his theoretical foundations explicit, and the post-structuralist theory in which his method can be grounded is therefore elaborated in the first chapter of this thesis, where an account is given of the theory of meaning on which post-structuralist translation theory is based, and which also includes an explanation of how this theory leads to a better understanding of what it believes translation is really for. Berman's proposals coincide to a large extent with the "cultural turn" in Translation Studies, and thus allow telling the story of the Baudelaire translations in all its details. Furthermore, this theory also licenses taking into consideration a number of peripheral texts which are historically linked to the Baudelaire translations, and which, as the title of this thesis suggests, become an integral part of the investigation.

After giving an overview of the areas and issues in the field of Translation Studies that also concern the approach taken here (Chapter Two), Berman's guidelines, which constitute a framework of guiding principles for Translation Criticism, will be presented (Chapter Three). On Berman's cue, Baudelaire's position as a language user and as an active member of the target literature, and the possible effects of this position on his reading of Poe's stories is investigated (Chapter Four). The question whether the translator had any views on translation in general, and what his specific project for the translation of Poe may have been is examined in Chapter Five. At this stage, a number of issues that are still up for debate in Poe studies, such as Baudelaire's plagiarism of Poe's "The Poetic Principle," and the extent of Baudelaire's contribution to the distorted picture by which Poe continues to be known in France, are tackled from a renewed and critical perspective. Aspects of Baudelaire's literary horizon which may have had an influence on his readings of Poe will also be discussed in Chapter Five. In Chapter Six Baudelaire's "translational" horizon, by which I refer to the norms and the practice which reigned in relation to translation during his time, and which help to further contextualise Baudelaire's own translation strategies, is investigated.

In the last two chapters of this thesis, these "pre-analytical enquiries" are connected with a detailed analysis of two of Baudelaire's translations, one of which is also compared with Amédée Pichot's 1853 translation of the same text. Strangely enough, such a comparison, which covers the full source and target texts, and compares Baudelaire's work with that of one of his contemporaries, has never been carried out before. As is pointed out on several occasions, the aim of the analyses and the comparison is not to decide whether Baudelaire was a good or a bad translator, but to see where his reading is marked by his position, project, stance and literary and translational horizons, and how it differs from that which can be had readers of the original text (and, in the case of Chapter Eight, of Pichot's translation). A description of the factors that had an impact on Baudelaire's reading and rewriting of Poe, and an assessment of the extent to which the translations bear traces of that impact, are the result of these inquiries. This thesis is therefore addressed at translation scholars in both literary and

applied translation studies, and translators of literary texts. However, since it also uncovers and discusses some of the major issues involved in the ambiguous relation that continues to exist between Charles Baudelaire and Edgar Allan Poe, it will be of further interest to scholars of Baudelaire and Poe, and of comparative literature in general.

Chapter One: The Foundations of a Para-Textual Approach to Translation as Rewriting

1.1. A Post-Structuralist Approach to Translation

1.1.1. Translation and the Kinship of Languages

Walter Benjamin's essay "The Task of the Translator" (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 71-82) is of seminal importance to Translation Studies in general and has been studied, interpreted or at least mentioned by most scholars writing about T.S. This essay is also Benjamin's preface to his own translation of the "Tableaux Parisiens," a chapter of poems from – coincidentally – Baudelaire's *Les fleurs du Mal*. In the essay Benjamin grounds his description of translation in a more general picture of the nature of language, and locates the question of translation and of the relationship between source and target text within the question of what he calls the "kinship" between languages. This "kinship" is not a simple relationship between two languages that somehow resemble one another, but "a fundamental relationship between languages in general" (A. Benjamin 1989: 93). Walter Benjamin, who says that "all translation is only a coming to terms with the foreignness of languages," talks about translation as the "realm of reconciliation and fulfilment of languages" (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 76).

The "suprahistorical kinship" (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 75) between languages results from the fact that "languages supplement one another in their intentions" (ibid.). "Intend" is the verb which Benjamin assigns to the dynamics of languages: for Benjamin, languages reveal "objects of intention," or "intended objects," and do so through a certain "mode of intention" (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 75). The suprahistorical kinship exists because all languages "intend" and they manage to do so through their respective "modes of intention," or, in Benjamin's own words, "die Art des Meinens" (W. Benjamin 1955: 54). Benjamin realizes that the distinction between "intended object" ("das Gemeinte" (W. Benjamin 1955: 55)), and "mode of intention" is fundamental for our appreciation of any linguistic

phenomenon, but his understanding of what could be seen as equivalents of Saussure's signifier (the "mode of intention") and signified (the "intended object") is idiosyncratic, because he also attributes the kinship between languages to the fact that these share their "intended objects." In order to illustrate this point, Benjamin uses the example of the words "Brot" and "pain," which according to him, both "intend" the same "intended object," though the German and French "modes of intention" are not the same:

Without distinguishing the intended object from the mode of intention, no firm grasp of this basic law of a philosophy of language can be achieved. The words *Brot* and *pain* "intend" the same object, but the modes of intention are not the same. It is owing to these modes that the word *Brot* means something different to a German than the word *pain* to a Frenchman, that these words are not interchangeable for them, that, in fact, they strive to exclude each other. *As to the intended object, however, the two words mean the very same thing.*

(W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 75 – my italics)

Now Benjamin's statement, that the "intended objects" for "Brot" and "pain" are identical, is a surprising equation for a German who lived in France for a good part of his life, and would therefore have been familiar with the culinary differences that exist between the French and the German varieties of bread. One realizes that Benjamin's "intended objects" cannot be equated with Saussure's signified, since Benjamin seems to exclude what Saussure called the "value" of the sign, signifier and signified, and which had led the Swiss linguist to state that "what characterizes each most exactly is being whatever the others are not" (Saussure 1983 [1916]: 115). It would seem that Benjamin integrated the dynamics of difference at play in the Saussurian sign in his conception of the "mode of intention," but not in the "intended object." In other words, Benjamin seems to have attributed difference to the signifier, but not to the signified.

The difference between signifieds, or, to put it in the surrealist imagery of René Magritte, between the picture under the German's and the Frenchman's bowler hat when they think "Brot" and "pain," is not found exclusively in Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*. Ortega y Gasset, for instance, in another seminal

essay in T.S. entitled “The Misery and the Splendor of Translation” (Ortega y Gasset 1992 [1937]: 93-112), states that:

Languages separate us and discommunicate not simply because they are different languages, but because they proceed from different mental pictures, from disparate intellectual systems – in the last instance, from divergent philosophies. (Ortega y Gasset 1992 [1937]: 107)

Benjamin’s “intended object” could therefore be problematic, but it must be pointed out that it is Harry Zohn’s English translation of Benjamin’s essay which, through omission, puts Benjamin in this position. Here are the English version of the lines in question again, followed by the German original:

It is owing to these modes that the word *Brot* means something different for a German than the word *pain* to a Frenchman, that these words are not interchangeable for them, that, in fact, they strive to exclude each other. As to the intended object, however, the two words mean the very same thing. (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 75)

In der Art des Meinens nämlich liegt es, daß beide Worte dem Deutschen und Franzosen je etwas Verschiedenes bedeuten, daß sie für beide nicht vertauschbar sind, ja sich letzten Endes auszuschließen streben; am Gemeinten aber, daß sie, *absolut genommen*, das Selbe und Identische bedeuten.
(Benjamin 1955: 55 – my italics)

The italics in the German extract highlight what Zohn’s translation has omitted: “absolut genommen,” i.e. in absolute terms, the intended objects are the same, which suggests that in *relative* terms, they may be quite different. With his use of “absolut genommen” Benjamin indicates his understanding that under circumstances that are not absolute, the objects of intention for two words such as “pain” and “Brot” are *not* the same. Incidentally, a recent French translation of this essay maintained the nuance in Benjamin’s theory of meaning, and translated “absolut genommen” as “pris absolument” (Benjamin 2000 [1923]: 251). What is important is that, in spite of his now less problematic description of the “intended object,” the fact that Benjamin does not attribute any dynamics of absolute difference to the “intended objects” of different languages, does not detract from the gist of his argument, quite the contrary. If for Benjamin, “intended objects”

can be considered to be the same, be it in “absolute” terms, this only reinforces his idea of a suprahistorical kinship between languages by ignoring a distinction which would work to separate languages instead of bringing them closer together. The essay does not treat the topic in any more detail than that, and since Benjamin never re-examined this theory of meaning, my comments will be restricted to what has been said. In fact, with its hiatus of a solid theory of meaning, Benjamin’s reasoning on translation joins the majority of theory in T.S., where such foundations are often lacking. Most translation theory presents descriptions of how languages that stand in a source and target relationship interrelate, but hardly ever begins by tackling the question of how a language relates signifiers to signifieds in the first place. As the reader will shortly see, post-structuralist theory on translation has addressed this problem to some extent.

As far as Benjamin’s kinship of languages is concerned, the relevance of the idea of kinship for translation is that, in this perspective, translation is seen as something which serves to reinforce the kinship that exists between all languages, though this does not happen through any relationship of imitation or likeness. Andrew Benjamin points to the fact that in Walter Benjamin’s views, the link between languages has nothing to do with mimesis (A. Benjamin 1989: 92), i.e. translation does not bring languages closer together by having one (target) language somehow imitate the structure and the lexicon of another (source) language, and neither should translation be seen as an expression of some natural likeness between languages, because the kinship of languages is not based on relations of similarity or similitude:

If the kinship of languages manifests itself in translations, this is not accomplished through a vague likeness between adaptation and original. It stands to reason that kinship does not necessarily involve likeness. (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 75)

The reason why kinship does not necessarily mean similarity or likeness can be found in Benjamin’s use of the German term for kinship. Like its Dutch counterpart “*verwantschap*,” the German noun “*Verwantschaft*” stands in the first place for family ties, and the notion of kinship is used by Benjamin with the

understanding that the individual members of a family may have something in common (another family member), but are not necessarily alike. Indeed, Benjamin states unequivocally that “The concept of kinship ... cannot be defined adequately by identity of origin” (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 75); the concept of kinship does not imply a belief that languages sprout from a common proto-language and *therefore* resemble each other. Rather, in this perspective languages are related to each other by an intention which underlies the combination of all their “modes of intention,” and which Benjamin calls *reine Sprache*, “pure language” (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 75). Moreover, for Benjamin, this underlying intention of languages, the “pure language,” has a deeper meaning than what structural linguistics understands by semiosis, a topic which will be treated in the next section.

Benjamin believes, then, that languages are connected within a suprahistorical kinship, not because of some common origin, but because of the fact that they “intend.” What is intended by the different languages can be considered the same “in absolute terms,” but the mode of intention is different for each language. Moreover, instead of having a common origin or some similarity that connects them, languages are related through a dynamics of supplementation which Benjamin calls *reine Sprache*. This entails for Benjamin that the intention of languages, which is their common *raison d’être*, cannot be attained by one language alone, but “is realized only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other” (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 75), and it is precisely this process of supplementation that is revealed through translation. Metaphorically speaking, Benjamin thus seems to see translation as the hand that draws back the cover to display the suprahistorical kinship between languages which it helps, through and by this act of disclosure, to establish and maintain. In Benjamin’s words, “Translation thus ultimately serves the purpose of expressing the central reciprocal relationship between languages” (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 74).

In “Des tours de Babel” (Derrida 1985a), Jacques Derrida also draws on his reading of Benjamin’s essay “The Task of the Translator” to develop a view of

translation and of the relationship that exists between an original text and its translation. Derrida further explains the kinship of languages and agrees with Walter Benjamin that:

A translation would not seek to say this or that, to transport this or that content, to communicate such a charge of meaning, but to re-mark the affinity among the languages, to exhibit its own possibility.
(Derrida 1985a: 186)

For Benjamin and Derrida the ultimate goal of translation (and Derrida also refers to the story of Babel as a source for this view) is thus an affirmation of language and of the various relationships that exist between languages and, therefore, cultures. Translation, which is seen as a force that enhances the way languages supplement each other, thus becomes a life-giving or nourishing act, a necessity for the survival of languages, and what is fed or enriched is first of all language in general.

1.1.2. Untranslatability, Desire and Necessity

In post-structuralist theory, translation is considered to be both a feasible and an impossible activity. For Benjamin too, there is “something” that escapes translation, and it is this element which underlies the question of (un)translatability, i.e. of the possibility or impossibility of translation:

The transfer can never be total, but what reaches this region is that element in a translation which goes beyond transmittal of subject matter. This nucleus is best defined as the element that does not lend itself to translation. (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 76)

Benjamin also describes this nucleus as the “echo” of the original work (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 77), and claims that “In all language and linguistic creations there remains in addition to what can be conveyed something that cannot be communicated” (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 80). This element is what Benjamin calls “pure language,” and for him “It is the task of the translator to

release in his own language that pure language which is under the spell of another” (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 80). In other words, translation generates pure language because “to turn the symbolizing into the symbolized, to regain pure language fully formed in the linguistic flux, is the tremendous and only capacity of translation” (ibid.). In a round table on translation Derrida explains how he understands Benjamin’s concept of “pure language,” which for him underscores the importance of translation for our grasp of what language is and does:

This is what we learn from a translation, rather than the meaning contained in the translated text, rather than this or that particular meaning. We learn that there is language, that language is of language, and that there is a plurality of languages which have that kinship with each other coming from their being languages. This is what Benjamin calls pure language, “die reine Sprache,” the being-language of language.
(Derrida 1985b: 124)

As indicated earlier, Benjamin’s *reine Sprache* has a more profound and metaphysical meaning than what we usually understand by semiosis or signification. In Benjamin’s theory the intangible supplement, this “something” which does not get translated, has a messianic character. Benjamin’s pure language, as Derrida’s “being-language of language,” are performatives: by simply taking place, languages promise something, namely language and the continuing existence of language, as will be shown, Derrida affirms that:

The promise of a translation is that it announces to us the being-language of language: there is language, and because there is something like language, one is both able and unable to translate. (Derrida 1985b: 124)

The simultaneous ability and inability to translate which is inherent in the “being-language of language” could be seen as an impasse in Derrida’s thinking about translation, but in no way does it paralyse his project, quite the contrary. As Kaisa Koskinen shows, it is precisely the supplement of “pure language,” i.e. the “being-language of language,” that helps Derrida state the necessity of translation and thus avoid the impasse:

The concept of supplement could be used to define translation. A supplement can be seen as an extra addition, but it may also indicate imperfection or insufficiency in the original since it can be seen in need of a supplement. (Koskinen 1994: 450)

There would thus be a need in the original, a necessity to be rewritten or translated, which is linked to the general necessity of translation as a life-sustaining force. A translation, just by being a translation, is the expression of this necessity and of the requirement of the original to be translated. Moreover, there is something about the nature of writing that engenders this necessity:

And if the original calls for a complement, it is because at the origin it was not there without fault, full, complete, total, identical to itself.
(Derrida 1985a: 188)

The original is deficient (or, as Antoine Berman will call it in Chapter Three, marked by “want”), and calls for a translation to renew and enrich itself. Derrida sometimes explains this need of the original and the promise held by translation by comparing translation to a marriage contract:

... a translation espouses the original when the two adjoined fragments, as different as they can be, complete each other so as to form a larger tongue in the course of a sur-vival that changes them both. ... It is what I have called the translation contract: hymen or marriage contract with the promise to produce a child whose seed will give rise to history and growth.
(Derrida 1985a: 190-191)¹

The last sentence is again Derrida’s reminder of the life-sustaining force of translation. As Kaisa Koskinen points out when reviewing these post-structuralist contributions to translation theory, one should therefore not stay focused on the fact that post-structuralist theory has declared translation impossible:

It has been pointed out that Jacques Derrida sees translation as an impossible task. This is, however, only partly true. What he actually says is that the *traditional* conception of translation as transportation of meanings is problematic. (Koskinen 1994: 450)

¹ Derrida’s idiosyncratic interpretation of the way the term survival is used in Benjamin’s text will be treated under section 1.1.3.5.

The traditional conception of translation as a mimetic relationship, or as striving for equivalence (striving but never succeeding, a failure expressed by the much older adage *traduttore traditore*, which can be applied as much to facile as to involuntary betrayal), has been replaced by an acceptance of simultaneous translatability and untranslatability, in other words, of the simultaneous possibility and impossibility of translation. The most practical result for T.S. of this fundamental change is that one can now concentrate on translation as a necessary, and therefore inevitable and real activity. The translatable/untranslatable conflict is neutralized by the introduction of a third notion: the necessity of translation as an activity which can never be perfect, which does not strive to attain equivalence based on mimesis, but which is carried out in the interest of texts and of language in general. The view that necessity comes to neutralise the possible/impossible dichotomy in which translation is so often hemmed, is also how Ortega y Gasset sees the question of translation. The necessity which arises from the realisation that translation is impossible and possible at the same time, qualities which Ortega y Gasset dubbed “The Misery and Splendor of Translation,” makes him proclaim: “translation is dead, long live translation!” (Ortega y Gasset 1992 [1937]: 97), meaning that even though translation is impossible, this should not stop one from trying because “... everything worthwhile, everything truly human – is difficult, very difficult; so much so, that it is impossible” (Ortega y Gasset 1992 [1937]: 99). The necessity of translation is thus seen by Ortega y Gasset, and by Benjamin, as an extension of the necessity of linguistic creation, a step towards rebuilding the tower of Babel:

Although translation, unlike art, cannot claim permanence for its products, its goal is undeniably a final, conclusive, decisive stage of all linguistic creation. In translation the original rises into a higher and purer linguistic air, as it were. It cannot live there permanently, to be sure, and it certainly does not reach it in its entirety. Yet, in a singularly impressive manner, at least it points the way to this region: the predestined, hitherto inaccessible realm of reconciliation and fulfillment of languages.
(W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 76)

1.1.3. The Unstable Origin(al)

In a study of translation where the translated texts have the prestige that the Baudelaire translations have – a prestige which has at times surpassed that of the original – questions regarding the relationship between translation and original seem unavoidable. The change of focus, away from the (im)possibility and towards the necessity of translation, has also allowed scholars to question and at times revert an age-old hierarchical relationship existing between original and translation, so that the original, which previously could never be equalled by its poor derivative cousin, is no longer considered to be “above” or automatically superior to the translation. On this issue, post-structuralist theory has seriously shuffled the cards, and has served to revise and make circular a relationship which translation scholars were beginning to find inconsistent with contemporary ideas about writing and authorship:

What I find most paralyzing to the actual translation and the actual translator is the hierarchical opposition where the original text and its author are placed on the upper level and the translation and other second-hand interpretations and interpreters on the lower. (Koskinen 1994: 447)

In order to explain this change it is necessary to briefly venture into some of the ideas that prompted it to occur.

1.1.3.1. Heidegger's *Being and Time*

The German philosopher Martin Heidegger's thoughts on language have definitely furthered the development of our changed perception of translation, more particularly in the formation of a post-structuralist approach to translation. The primary source of this contribution is Heidegger's attempt to frame the question of the experience of pre-ontological thought as described in his study *Being and Time*. The trajectory that Heidegger follows there has had an important impact on our thinking about language, as Gentzler confirms:

Through the attempt to structure a question from where one might begin to locate an answer, Heidegger was able to see that language/thought restraints limited his thinking, and he began to destructure or deconstruct those limits. (Gentzler 1993: 155)

Heidegger's project was to investigate the conditions in which ontological thought is possible. In *Being and Time* he tried to frame the "question of Being" which a "being" could be asking. In other words, Heidegger was trying to think a pre-ontological inquiry, and to see if pre-ontological thought is possible or not. The attempt to formulate the questions which should lead up to the "question of Being" resulted in a realisation that:

Being does not exist outside anything, certainly not outside of the place where the question occurs. The question happens only in the question, only happens as relations in language, poetry, and thought are formed. (Gentzler 1993: 154)

The result of this realisation is that language encompasses everything, and that one's use of words such as "being" is misleading. In that sense, language is perceived to be restrictive, as Heidegger testifies:

It is not by giving something a definite character [in an assertion] that we first discover that which shows itself – the hammer – as such; but *when we give it such a character, our seeing gets restricted to it.* (quoted in Mulhall 1996: 92 – my italics)

In order to avoid the restraints that language imposes on one's seeing and thinking and to neutralize their effects, Heidegger proposes to let language speak for itself. Gentzler states that it is this part of Heidegger's thought which has had direct relevance for a renewed perspective on translation:

There is a sense in Heidegger's writing that once the philosophical debris is dismantled, a return to a pre-original moment is possible and that pre-ontological thought can be experienced. ... Translation becomes understood in terms of returning to the pre-originary, of allowing the virginal experience of language to occur. (Gentzler 1993: 155)

In *Of Grammatology* (Derrida 1997 [1967]), Derrida also recognizes the fundamental importance of framing the question of Being, or rather, framing the *question* of being as a way to “experience” language – and he puts his finger on Heidegger’s great achievement:

Because it is indeed the *question* of being that Heidegger asks metaphysics. And with it the question of truth, of sense, of the logos. The incessant mediation upon that question does not restore confidence. On the contrary, it dislodges the confidence at its own depth, which, being a matter of the meaning of being, is more difficult than is often believed. (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 22)

1.1.3.2. Derrida and Heidegger: From the Origin to the Trace

The Origin

Derrida, whose interest in Heidegger is known, also seems affected by a fundamental wariness of language, and especially of our previously unwary usage of it in framing the philosophical and existential questions that have shaped Western thinking. However, the pre-ontological enquiries that Heidegger makes are not really Derrida’s project. Indeed, in answering the question of how he situates himself in relation to Heidegger’s position regarding the pre-ontological experience, Derrida answers that Heidegger, in fact, “presupposes something like an archi-originary intactness that has been basically forgotten in advance, immediately covered over with oblivion from the first” (Derrida 1985b: 114). Referring to the pre-originary presence as a “kernel,” Derrida uncovers a tradition – to which Heidegger pertains – in Western metaphysical and philosophical thinking, whose search is motivated by a desire for an originary presence:

There is a prehistoric, preoriginary relation to the intact kernel, and it is only beginning with this relation that any desire whatsoever can constitute itself. Thus, the desire or the *phantasm* of the intact kernel is irreducible – *despite the fact that there is no kernel*. (Derrida 1985b: 115)

Derrida sees Heidegger's hope to find a pre-originary presence, and his assumption that there *is* a kernel or nucleus that has remained unchanged, as the basic component of all human desire. It is one's thinking about the kernel, or, to go back to Heidegger's question, one's attempts to think the pre-ontological question (one's attempts to think the "Being of beings" (Mulhall 1996: 3)), that set in motion the desire for an originary presence, and without this desire that presence would not exist. Derrida adds – and this remark can now be embedded in the previous discussion of the "need" of the original to be translated:

... likewise without Necessity and without what comes along to interrupt and thwart that desire, desire itself would not unfold.[11] I don't know what else to call this but Necessity with a capital N, something that no one can do anything about. (Derrida 1985b: 116)

Derrida explains how Heidegger's insistence, that the question of Being is framed within the *question* of being, leads to a logocentrism that is also a continuation of classical metaphysical thought. For Derrida, this logocentrism is the reinstatement of the Logos, or, in Heidegger's terms, the *Urwort*:

Heideggerian thought would reinstate rather than destroy the instance of the logos and of the truth of being as "primum signatum:" the "transcendental" signified ... the "originary word" ("*Urwort*"), the transcendental word assuring the possibility of being-word of all other words. (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 20)

The Trace

Derrida thus maintains what was earlier called a wariness of language, but does not adopt Heidegger's underlying desire for an originary presence. In rejecting a desire for the "originary word" Derrida uncovers the logocentric tendency of Heidegger's search, and therefore proposes to question the origin or kernel by putting it "under erasure."² Derrida's project as proposed in *Of Grammatology* is

² "Under erasure" is Spivak's translation of Derrida's "sous rature." Like Heidegger, Derrida puts certain terms under erasure, though "there is a certain difference between what Heidegger puts under erasure and what Derrida does" (Spivak 1997: xv). "Sous rature" means "to write a word,

precisely to uncover and dismantle the pervasiveness of logocentrism. Moreover, and this is relevant for the discussion on the cultural aspects of translation in Chapter Two, in Derrida's thinking logocentrism is essentially the same as ethnocentrism.

Instead of the original and the central Logos, instead of the divine word and the originary presence, Derrida therefore proposes the concepts of "trace," "différance," and "arche-writing." All three concepts are mentioned simultaneously because as Spivak states:

For "trace" one can substitute "arche-writing" ("archi-écriture"), or "différance," or in fact quite a few other words that Derrida uses in the same way. (Spivak 1997: xv)

In order to explain the arrival of these three different though interchangeable concepts, Spivak describes the nature of Derrida's project as follows:

At once inside and outside a certain Hegelian and Heideggerian tradition, Derrida, then, is asking us to change certain habits of mind: the authority of the text is provisional, the original is a trace; contradicting logic, we must learn to use and erase our language at the same time. (Spivak 1997: xviii)

In Derrida's thinking, then, the origin itself becomes something as un-fixed as a trace. Not attempting to think the origin and rejecting a search for a "transcendental" signified, Derrida instead posits the concept of the trace, and the trace is the framework of the sign's becoming-sign. For Derrida there are no originary signs or originary meanings, "there is neither symbol nor sign but a becoming-sign of the symbol" (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 47). The origin, or the originary sign, is thus unstable, or, a preferable description, always changing, always already something else:

cross it out, and then print both word and deletion. (Since the word is inaccurate, it is crossed out. Since it is necessary, it remains legible)" (Spivak 1997: xiv).

The immotivation of the trace ought now to be understood as an operation and not as a state, as an active movement, a demotivation, and not as a given structure. (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 51)

1.1.3.3. Derrida's Différance

Derrida thus replaces the origin by a trace, which is the moving, fluctuating framework in which the sign becomes sign, and the term that is intimately linked up with this concept, the word that makes the trace possible and also easier to understand in a linguistic perspective, is *différance*, a term which Derrida has coined for a number of reasons, not in the least its continually shifting meaning:

The pure trace is différence. It does not depend on any sensible plenitude, audible or visible, phonic or graphic. It is, on the contrary, the condition of such a plenitude. Although it does not exist, although it is never a being-present outside of all plenitude, its possibility is by rights anterior to all that one calls sign. (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 62)

The origin, which has been put under erasure, is *différance*, and *différance* is the *conditio sine qua non* for the trace. *Différance* is an unusual term – but not, as Joseph et al. point out, a neologism (Joseph et al. 2001: 194). In French *différance* has three components: the meaning contained in the adjective *différent* (which means “different”), the nominalization of the present participle *différant* (as in *reconnaître, reconnaissant, reconnaissance*), and the double meaning of the verb “différer” which can mean both “differ” and “defer, put off, postpone.” The part of the meaning of *différance* that means “difference” in English is the same as Saussure’s understanding of difference, which can be found in his statement “*In the language itself, there are only differences*” (Saussure 1983 [1916]: 118 – in italics in the text). Culler gives a further description of this structuralist notion of difference:

Acts of signification depend on differences, such as the contrast between “food” and “nonfood” that allows food to be signified, or the contrast between the signifying element that allows a sequence to function as a signifier. ... The noise that is “present” when one says *bat* is inhabited by

the traces of forms one is not uttering and it can function as a sign only insofar as it consists of such traces. (Culler 1982: 96)

With his concept of *différance*, Derrida thus sets Saussurean difference in motion by adding the notion of deferral, and as with the trace, post-structuralist *différance* therefore also obtains a sense of continual movement, of permanent shifting, differing and deferring. No wonder then that *différance* is difficult to pin down and often easier defined by saying what it is not: Derrida says, for instance, that “*Différance* is also something other than finitude” (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 68). Culler describes *différance* as “the systematic play of differences, of traces of difference, of the spacing [espacement] by which elements relate to one another” (Culler 1982: 97).

The concept of *différance* is an enrichment to Saussurian semiotics and to structural linguistics because it constitutes both the condition for signification and signification itself, “an act of differing which produces differences” (Culler 1982: 97). A more general result is that *différance* makes it possible to look at the sign as something that is never present but always already deferred, one could say present and absent at the same time. *Différance* is therefore what makes it feasible to think the simultaneous possibility and impossibility of something, and in the case of translation, to accept the simultaneous occurrence of translatability and untranslatability – of the possibility and impossibility of translation.

1.1.3.4. The Origin Under Erasure

Presence

Différance also needs to be viewed from the perspective of Derrida’s rejection of the “transcendental” signified and of an originary “presence” as underlying all classical metaphysical thinking. Culler explains the importance of the notion of presence in Derrida’s thought by using a paradox from Zeno. He explains how the

flight of an arrow is the illustration of how something can be present and absent at the same time:

The presence of motion is conceivable, it turns out, only insofar as every instant is already marked with the traces of the past and future.
(Culler 1982: 94)

The unquestioned ubiquity of presence in Western thinking has been uncovered by Derrida as having led to a “metaphysics of presence” (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 131).³ Derrida sees this “metaphysics of presence” as the symptom of the yearning for a definable and stable centre or origin. Derrida confirms that “It could be shown that all the names related to fundamentals, to the principles, or to the centre have always designated an invariable presence” (Derrida 1978: 279), or, going back to Culler (and Zeno’s arrow) “as in the case of motion, what is supposedly present is already complex and differential, marked by difference, a product of difference” (Culler 1982: 96).

The rejection of presence is also what makes Derrida’s apparently contradictory or arbitrary method much more acceptable. It underlies his method of reading and deconstructing texts, always looking for the absent of the two terms that form the dichotomies or polarisations that lie under the surface of every text. Because as Culler explains:

... deconstruction does not elucidate texts in the traditional sense of attempting to grasp a unifying content or theme; it investigates the work of metaphysical oppositions in their arguments and the ways in which textual figures and relations, such as the play of the supplement in Rousseau, produce a double, aporetic logic.
(Culler 1982: 109)

³ According to Spivak, “Derrida uses the word ‘metaphysics’ simply as shorthand for any science of presence” (Spivak 1997: xxi).

Logocentrism and Writing

Derrida also sees presence and the desire for presence as being directly responsible for logocentrism, i.e. for the desire and belief in the presence or existence of a transcendental signified:

The formal essence of the signified is *presence*, and the privilege of its proximity to the logos as *phone* is the privilege of presence. ... The formal essence of the sign can only be determined in terms of presence.
(Derrida 1997 [1967]: 18)⁴

This proximity to the logos as spoken word and the devaluation of writing that it has entailed, will now briefly be elucidated.

Derrida's renewed perspective on writing is a direct consequence of his views on presence. In an epigraph to the chapter entitled "Linguistics and Grammatology" in *Of Grammatology* Derrida quotes J.J. Rousseau:

Writing is nothing but the representation of speech; it is bizarre that one gives more care to the determining image than to the object.
– J.-J. Rousseau, Fragment inédit d'un essai sur les langues.
(Derrida 1997 [1967]: 27 – in italics in the text)

Derrida wants to show, with this quotation of Rousseau as a first illustration, how throughout "written" history, writing itself has been devalued, and he wants to uncover and explain why "Philosophers write, but they do not think that philosophy ought to be writing" (Culler 1982: 89). As was just shown, Rousseau dismissed writing as being merely a supplement to speech – with speech, represented by the *phone*, being perceived as more immediate, closer to reality and most importantly, truth. Derrida's wish to "reinstate" writing should be linked up with a more general critique of phonocentrism, of putting the *phone* first. This precedence of the sound image is an idea of Saussure's, who sees the phonetic signifier as a demonstration of the linearity or temporality of the sign:

⁴ *phone* here means speech sound, or in Saussurian terms, the sound image.

The linguistic signal, being auditory in nature, has a temporal aspect.
(Saussure 1983 [1916]: 69)

For Derrida, however, Saussurian phonocentrism should in turn be seen as a manifestation of an even more general “centrism,” namely logocentrism or Logocentrism, the belief or desire for an originary presence as found in the Logos, the divine word. Of Saussure’s preference for the spoken word as the signifier *par excellence* Derrida asks emphatically:

Why does a project of *general* linguistics, concerning the *internal system in general of language in general*, outline the limits of its field by excluding, as *exteriority in general*, a *particular* system of writing, however important it might be, even were it to be *in fact* universal?
(Derrida 1997 [1967]: 39)

The universality of phonocentrism is thus equated by Derrida with L/logocentrism (the non-capitalised word refers to the centrality of the phonetic signifier, and the capitalised word refers to the centrality of the divine word), and this, moreover, is thought to be a typically Western phenomenon: “writing,” Derrida says, “is seen as transitory crisis and accident of passage, and it is right to consider this teleology to be a Western ethnocentrism” (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 40).

Logocentrism (capitalized or not) is thus another symptom of a metaphysics of presence: it assumes the presence of a first, originary and transcendental signifier, the divine word. It is also the kind of thought which instates the pairs or dichotomies around which texts are built, pairs that consist of a “strong” term whose entire presence precedes the “weaker” one of the pair, as Culler explains:

Logocentrism thus assumes the priority of the first term and conceives the second in relation to it, as a complication, a negation, a manifestation, or a disruption of the first. (Culler 1982: 93)

In this way, the speech/writing dichotomy in structural linguistics gives precedence to the first term (speech), and writing has become the dubious, even dangerous supplement, that is put aside and ignored. Derrida’s reinstatement of writing is very important for translation because it entails a reinstatement of the

written text. For Derrida, what is to be “found” in any piece of writing is to be looked for in the text, in writing, and nowhere else. The most succinct expression of this view is Derrida’s famous “Il n’y a pas de hors-texte” (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 158), “There is no outside-of-the text,” literally, or, “There is nothing outside of the text.” Derrida hereby insists that “there has never been anything but writing” and “Although it is not commentary, our reading must be intrinsic and remain within the text” (Derrida 1997 [1967]: 159).

As reinstated writing, however, the text is no longer a closed-off and stable entity, but a supplement in the chain of supplements, of which the “originary presence” is the trace, present and absent at the same time, continually deferred. It is especially in his discussion of Rousseau’s “*Essai sur les origines des langues*” that Derrida uncovers this continuous deferral of presence. Because, as Culler explains:

Rousseau’s texts, like many others, teach that presence is always deferred, that supplementation is possible only because of an originary lack, and they thus suppose that we conceive what we call “life” on the model of the text, on the model of supplementation figured by signifying processes. What these writings maintain is not that there is nothing outside the empirical texts – the writings – of a culture, but that what lies outside are more supplements, chains of supplements, thus putting in question the distinction between inside and outside. (Culler 1982: 103)

This would mean that there is no clear distinction between a text and its supplements, be they translations or any other kind of supplement. A reading of a translation and of the original will therefore have to take into account that the borders of a text, the frontier between original and translation or more generally between a text and its supplements, between “inside” and “outside” have been obliterated. It is from this perspective that the analyses of Baudelaire’s translations will be approached, following Antoine Berman, who is clearly imbued with these insights. It is also this realisation which leads to a consideration of the texts that surround a translation (prefaces, footnotes, etc.) as an integral part of the object of investigation. Moreover, the idea of texts being linked to each other fundamentally by their very nature or “texture” fits into a view of translation

as rewriting, and is also found in discussions of intertextuality and of para-text. These are topics which will be treated in the second part of this chapter.

1.1.3.5. Überleben, Fortleben and Survival

The last element to consider in this section on the philosophical foundations of the post-structuralist approach to translation, is the function or purpose that post-structuralist translation theory generally attributes to translation. As has been shown, for Derrida and for Benjamin, and for those whose views are based on their insights (among whom Antoine Berman also included himself, at least, that is, in his last work (Berman 1995)), translation serves the purpose of demonstrating the being-language of language; it is the affirmation of language as language. But the answer to the question “What is translation *for*?” can be more specific still.

In “The Task of the Translator,” the concepts of the kinship between languages and the intangible supplement to all languages (pure language) allow Walter Benjamin to introduce the idea that translation is what ensures the continued life of a text. Andrew Benjamin explains that:

Not only does [Walter] Benjamin reorientate the question of translation by locating the possibility of translation in the nature of language, he also introduces a fundamentally important distinction between the life and after-life of the literary work. ... The life and the after-life of the text pertain not to history but to the text as a system of signs; as language. (Benjamin 1989: 4)

The relevance of the question of life and after-life for a case like Baudelaire’s translations, whose “after-life” now spans over 150 years, seems obvious and must be addressed here. Walter Benjamin’s idea of the survival of a text through translation is taken up by Derrida, who also notices the important distinction between the terms “Fortleben” and “Überleben,” which both occur in “The Task of the Translator.” The two German terms are captured by one word in both English and French: “survival” and “survie” – but the verb “fortleben” means

“live on, continue to live,” whereas “überleben” means “to survive.” Derrida says about Benjamin’s use of these terms:

At times he [Benjamin] says “Überleben” and at other times “Fortleben.” These two words do not mean the same thing (“Überleben” means above life and therefore survival as something rising above life; “Fortleben” means survival in the sense of something prolonging life), even though they are translated in French by the one word “survivre,” which already poses a problem. (Derrida 1985b: 122)

However, a close look at the (original) German version of Benjamin’s essay reveals that Benjamin does not “at times” use one term and “at other times” the other. Out of ten occurrences, Benjamin only opts for “Überleben” once, and when he does so, he even indicates some hesitation by putting the term between quotation marks: “Zwar nicht aus seinem Leben so sehr denn aus seinem >Überleben<” (Benjamin 1955: 51), which in Harry Zohn’s translation becomes “not so much from its life as from its *afterlife*” (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 73 – my italics). In all the other cases, Benjamin opts for “Fortleben,” and even in a context of the “eternal” afterlife of texts, still talks about “ihres grundsätzlich ewigen Fortlebens” (W. Benjamin 1955: 52), and “am ewigen Fortleben der Werke” (Benjamin 1955: 55), while both terms are translated as “survival” in Zohn’s translation. It is thus in the English version of the essay (and the French, where the term “survie” occurs in each of the cited instances) that the idea of “survival” is foregrounded, and that the idea of “rising into a higher realm” is more prominent than the idea of “living-on,” whereas the opposite is the case for Benjamin’s original text. The difference between the source text and the translation is actually carried forward by Derrida’s personal focus on the term “Überleben,” a term for which Derrida has a lexico-semantic preference, which he justifies by the lexical proximity between the terms “überleben,” “übersetzen” and “übertragen.” In “Des tours de Babel” Derrida says: “*Überleben* has an essential relation with *Übersetzen*” (Derrida 1985a: 178), and this “Überleben” is definitely a question of rising higher:

Such sur-vival gives more of life, more than a surviving. The work does not simply live longer, it lives more and better, beyond the means of the author. (Derrida 1985a: 179)

Derrida's interpretation of the question of survival in Benjamin's essay could thus be criticized for providing a slanted reading, for suffering from the same Achilles' heel that Joseph et al. refer to when pointing to the fact that Derrida's readings work not so much with the texts as such, but with Derrida's "own particular (and idiosyncratic) readings of them" (Joseph et al. 2001: 201). In other texts (Derrida 1979 especially, but also Derrida 1985b), the idea of sur-vival does not disappear, but shares a space with the other term: "living on."

Although Derrida's reading of the issue of "Fortleben" and "Überleben" is idiosyncratic, it must be conceded that the idea of "rising into a higher realm" is clearly present in Benjamin's thought. Benjamin's ideas on the afterlife of a text are inspired by Goethe's triad of translation, which is a temporal view of translation that confers three stages to translation, with each stage constituting an improvement on the previous one, or a progress towards the ultimate translation. Like Goethe, Benjamin focuses on the essentially temporal nature of translation:

For a translation comes later than the original, and since the important works of world literature never find their chosen translators at the time of their origin, their translation marks their stage of continued life.
(W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 73)

The temporality of translation and the difficulties that a concept such as "chosen translators" can give rise to will be taken up in Chapter Three, in the frame of a discussion of Antoine Berman's views on these issues. What should be highlighted at this point is the close link between the idea of "living on" or "survival" and the aforementioned necessity of translation, which now comes to complete the picture. As has been shown, the translatable/untranslatable axis has been subverted by the realisation that translation is a necessary activity, necessary because it ensures the continued life of a text and necessary because it is the continuation of linguistic life in general. The possibility of a text to live on through translation is also its possibility to live on through any form of rewriting

(a term which will be specified shortly), and this is determined by the text itself, or rather, by its degree of “translatability”: if a text is fully translatable, it does not enclose within its borders that element which motivates the desire for translation, “that element in a translation which goes beyond transmittal of subject matter” (W. Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 76), and therefore does not invite translation. Conversely, if a text is fully untranslatable, translation obviously does not take place either. Since the need for translation is determined by the tension between translatability and untranslatability, the chances which a text stands to “live on” through translation are entirely dependent on the text itself. In order to engender the need for translation or rewriting, texts therefore have to be translatable and untranslatable at the same time:

... a text lives only if it lives *on* [*sur-vit*], and it lives *on* only if it is *at once* translatable *and* untranslatable ... Totally translatable, it disappears as a text, as writing, as a body of language [*langue*]. Totally untranslatable, even within what is believed to be one language, it dies immediately; this triumphant translation is neither the life nor the death of the text, only or already its living *on*, its life after life, its life after death.
(Derrida 1997 [1967]: 102)

In terms of necessity, one could then say that it is a question of the desire or the need that is found in the text, a sort of solicitation issued by the text, that ensures its survival through translation:

Given the surviving structure of an original text – always a sacred text in its own way insofar as it is a pure original – the task of the translator is precisely to respond to this demand for survival which is the very structure of the original text. (Derrida 1985b: 122)

The necessity of translation is thus a feature of the original – logically an original would not be called an original if it did not have this need, since it would not have a translation. Koskinen confirms that:

... according to Derrida, the original is the first petitioner because it needs translation (and it also owes the translation its status as an original).
(Koskinen 1994: 450)

Translation is necessary to ensure the survival of texts, and the necessity of translation is expressed in the first place by a plea issued by a text. For Benjamin and Derrida, not all texts possess this quality, and it is precisely this quality which makes a text “great” or not. This theme also informs Berman’s views on “great translations” to be discussed in Chapter Three. Before going into the links that exist, through the same necessity, between translation and other types of rewriting, a brief excursus will be carried out, in order to show how widespread these post-structuralist views on translation are. What follows is a discussion of a contemporary non-western way of looking at translation, which is intimately linked with the approach presented here.

1.1.3.6. Excursus on Cannibalism

One of the many metaphors that have been applied to the act of translation is the idea of translation as cannibalism. This brief excursus into the meaning of the cannibalistic view seems justified: there is a close – though not immediately apparent – similarity between the anthropophagous metaphors and Walter Benjamin’s views on translation. Moreover, the cannibalistic metaphor was inspired by ideas about translation that rejected linguistic imperialism and colonial and euro-centric attitudes to translation, thus bringing us closer to Derrida’s rejection of logocentrism and also to the topics treated under the “cultural turn” in Translation Studies, which will be discussed in Chapter Two:

Translation, says the Brazilian translator Haraldo de Campos, ... may be likened to a blood transfusion, where the emphasis is on the health and nourishment of the translator. This is a far cry from the notion of faithfulness to the original, of the translator as servant of the source text. (Bassnett & Trivedi 1999: 5)

From the image of a blood transfusion the move to a cannibalistic metaphor is not that big a step. Cannibalism, as Vieira explains:

... ultimately entails a tribute to the other’s strength that one wishes to have combined with one’s own for greater vitality. While undercutting the

plenitude of any origin as the only source of strength, it makes an incision and a conjoining to unite the blood and marrow of the one with the other. (Vieira 1999: 96)

Cannibalism can thus be used not only as a metaphor for the “transformational” part of translation, but also because it takes a different view of the process of transformation: the original disappears “between the jaws” of the translator, and the “outcome” is something that has been nourished by the original, while it has at the same time transformed it and the translator forever. Obviously, de Campos’ cannibalistic metaphor does not have the same *telos* as Benjamin’s proposals. As Vieira indicates, in Haraldo de Campos’ cannibalistic metaphor, translation and the translator do not have the messianic character which Benjamin gave it – an aspect of Benjamin’s theory that has exaggeratedly been called “Walter Benjamin and his translator-angel carrying a hermetic third language into the metaworld” (Barnstone 1993: 240). Indeed, Vieira tells us, de Campos’ metaphor, instead of being “angelic,” has a satanic character:

If Benjamin casts the translator's task in an angelical light, that of liberating the pure language, de Campos highlights the satanic import of it, for “every translation that refuses submissively to serve a content, which refuses the tyranny of a pre-ordered *Logos*, breaks with the metaphysical closure of presence (as Derrida would say),” is “a satanic enterprise” (de Campos 1981a: 180). (Vieira 1999: 109)

Whatever the metaphysics underlying the cannibalistic metaphor may be, what is important to remember from a view of translation as antropophagia is that it constitutes another clear refusal to view the original as a unique and stable source. Instead, in an anti-colonial or anti-ethnocentric mode, though the translation is supposed to capture the original and feed off its “flesh and blood,” this is not, however, a unidirectional motion – and this is where the cannibalistic metaphor joins the post-structuralist views on translation. Both the original and the translator are considered to be transformed through the cannibalistic process: the original rises into a higher realm, or lives on, while the translator’s activity, which prompts language into being-language, enriches both the translator and his

language (and, of course, language in general). This is also why Derrida can talk about a (marriage) contract when referring to what a translation should achieve:

... the translator must assure the survival, which is to say the growth, of the original. Translation augments and modifies the original, which, in so far as it is living on, never ceases to be transformed and to grow. It modifies the original even as it also modifies the translating language. This process – transforming the original as well as the translation – is the translation contract between the original and the translating text.
(Derrida 1985a: 122)

1.1.4. Interim Conclusions

Walter Benjamin's significance for the theoretical and philosophical basis of this study lies in his attempt to explain what translation is essentially *for*, and why it exists. Even when one differs with Benjamin and state that signifieds in different languages are not identical – a view supported by a majority of linguists – accepting Benjamin's argument that all languages "intend," and that it is through this "intention" that they are related to one another, does not constitute a great leap of faith. Languages are related through a dynamics of kinship that is not necessarily based on any notion of common origin or similarity, but on supplementation. The link between Benjamin and Derrida is established through this supplement, and though they have a different interpretation of what the contents of the supplement may be (for the first, it is pure language, for the latter, the being-language of language), they both claim that translation is the enactment of that supplement.

From Benjamin and Derrida one learns that translation is a nourishing, life-giving act for texts and language in general, which are both enriched in this process of transformation. They also indicate that supplementation only happens because there is a need or lack at the origin. They raise one's awareness of the tension that exists *within* the original text, and which also marks the activity of translation, by showing that an original gains its status as an original because it has issued a plea for translation, and it has done so because it contains both translatable and

untranslatable elements. The simultaneous occurrence of translatability and untranslatability, which becomes acceptable if one adopts Derrida's concepts of trace and *différance*, allows one to neutralise the stymieing effect of this dichotomy with a third notion: the necessity of translation, and the need of the original to be transformed in order to live on. One of the reasons why these views constitute an appropriate basis on which to ground both Berman's proposals and their application to the Baudelaire translations, is precisely that the existence of these translations has played such an important part in the survival of the original texts, both on the level of the source and target literature, and even on a broader international level.

The possibility of grounding a philosophy of translation in a theory of meaning is a rare if not absent phenomenon in Translation Studies. Derrida's critique of logocentrism reveals that a philosophy of translation which posits itself on the basis of a logic of presence will inevitably be "centrist" – and in translation theory, as we will see in Chapter Two, this centrism leads to euro-centrism and prescriptivism, positions which it seems preferable to avoid as much as possible. Lastly, Derrida's views shed new light on the nature of the original text and on the relationship between translation and original. Post-structuralist theory questions the previously stable origin(al), and it has been shown that the Derridaean concepts of the trace and *différance* can replace the idea of a fixed and neatly delineated origin by positing an originary presence which is always already becoming something else, an origin that is continuously deferred and transformed through supplementation, translation, or rewriting. This questioning of the original text, of its status and its relationship with the translation are topics which will be further developed in the second part of this chapter, which continues on the basic view of translation as a supplement.

1.2. Translation as Rewriting and the Importance of Para-Text

1.2.1. Introduction

Translation, then, is one of the many forms in which works of literature are “rewritten,” one of many “rewritings.” (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990: 10)

The view of translation as rewriting is one of the consequences of considering translation in a post-structuralist perspective, and can be further explained in a number of ways. One can approach it from the angle that Lefevere has called refraction theory, a theory that is closely linked to both a systems approach and post-structuralist theory on translation. One can also look at rewriting from the perspective of intertextuality, and in this way explain the link between an original and all the texts that surround it. A third perspective, which actually includes the preceding two, is based on a concern for the para-texts that surround a translation, and which are considered as equivalent to the translation in their capacity of rewriting the original. All of this theory is grounded in structuralist and post-structuralist thinking about text, and the point of this section is not so much to select a particular view among these, but to guide the reader towards some of the insights that a view of translation as rewriting can entail, and indicate why this view is useful for the particular case of the Baudelaire translations.

1.2.2. Refraction Theory

Lefevere’s ideas on translation as a form of rewriting are the result of his thinking about Toury’s Polysystem approach, which will be examined in Chapter Two.

Lefevere, like Toury, recognizes that a literary system is:

... embedded in the environment of a culture or society. It is a contrived system, i.e. it consists of both objects (texts) and people who write, refract, distribute, read those texts. (Lefevere 1982: 5)

The important difference between Lefevere and Toury is that for Lefevere, systems do not have the predictability which Toury wants to attribute to them. Lefevere says that “literary systems are stochastic, not mechanistic” (Lefevere 1982: 14), and that “Like the laws of physics, the categories of the systems approach should be applied to individual cases in a flexible manner” (ibid.). As will be shown in Chapter Two, this is the opposite of Toury’s aims for his Polysystem approach.

Within this view of the literary system as a stochastic entity, Lefevere sees translations as texts which are “produced on the borderline between two systems” (Lefevere 1982: 4), and this is why they are the clearest illustration of what happens to both the text and the literary system when a text is, in Lefevere’s terms, refracted. Refraction, a term which Lefevere gradually replaces with the now more current term “rewriting,” is defined as:

the adaptation of a work of literature to a different audience, with the intention of influencing the way in which that audience reads the work. (Lefevere 1982: 4)

Refraction, then, is literature rewritten into any type of different text or discourse:

Refractions are to be found in the obvious form of translation, or in the less obvious form of criticism ..., commentary ..., teaching, the collection of works in anthologies, the production of plays. (Lefevere 1982: 4)

In Chapter Two, the forces which Lefevere distinguishes as coming into play when a text is refracted/rewritten, forces of ideology and patronage that form Lefevere’s main occupation in his *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, will be discussed more elaborately. The main concern here is an explanation of the theoretical foundations of the above statements – something which Lefevere fails to do in that 1992 work. How can translation be seen as rewriting, on a par with other “commentaries” such as criticism?

The source of the term “rewriting” is, as Gentzler points out, to be found in the post-structuralist circle of *Tel Quel*. It is Jacqueline Risset, says Gentzler, who uses the term “rewriting” there instead of “translation” to refer to her translation of Joyce’s *Finnegan’s Wake* into Italian (Gentzler 1993: 169-170). Risset considers her work to be not so much a translation as an “elaboration,” which does not stand in opposition to the original as in the classical hierarchy, but as a “work in progress,” a term which would also indicate a temporal view of translation, a perspective which is reminiscent of Benjamin (and Goethe). For Lefevere, even original works of literature are like Derrida’s supplements in a chain of supplements, with texts continually supplementing other texts:

Individual works of literature are, to a certain extent, recombinations of generic elements, plots, motifs, symbols, etc. – in fact, essentially the “piecing together of other people’s ideas,” but in such a way as to give them a novel impact. (Lefevere 1982: 17)

Though the meta-linguistic implications of this statement seem rather too far-reaching, on a linguistic and textual level it is precisely this view of texts as consisting of various snatches from other texts, which allows Lefevere to call translation rewriting, and to put translation on a par with literary criticism and other written commentaries such as anthologies or even prefaces. This is where the concept of rewriting becomes of interest for the present study.

1.2.3. Barthes’ and Bakhtin’s Views on Intertextuality

Lefevere’s and Risset’s ideas on the nature of text as a “work in progress” are similar to those held by Roland Barthes on intertextuality. In a chapter entitled “De l’œuvre au texte” (Barthes 1984: 63-99) Barthes explains how a literary text (which he distinguishes from the “work” of an author) is not a limited domain with fixed barriers but a crossroads where a multiplicity of voices comes into play – a texture of texts which Barthes calls “pluralité stéréophonique” (Barthes 1984: 75). “Pluralité stéréophonique” stands for intertextuality: it designates an interweaving of signifiers, of quotes, of references, of discourses, etc. that have all

already been written somewhere else and/or by someone else. Barthes' approach to text and textuality is best known through his essay "La mort de l'auteur," where he disclaims the author's privilege of being the sole "origin" of the text, and demands a re-appreciation of the reader, all in the interest of the text:

Ainsi se dévoile l'être total de l'écriture: un texte est fait d'écritures multiples, issues de plusieurs cultures et qui entrent les unes avec les autres en dialogue ... il y a un lieu où cette multiplicité se rassemble et ce lieu, ce n'est pas l'auteur comme on a dit jusqu'à présent, c'est le lecteur. (Barthes 1984: 69)

The link between the birth of the reader and Derrida's previously mentioned chain of supplements by which each text is a deferred continuation of every other text, is called dissemination. Dissemination, a term which Derrida also uses, is how the new proprietor of the text, the reader, is to handle his/her text. Dissemination thus happens with the reader:

Le Texte n'est pas coexistence de sens, mais passage, traversée, il ne peut donc relever d'une interprétation, même libérale, mais d'une explosion, d'une dissémination. (Barthes 1984: 75)

Moreover, for Barthes, intertextuality is a feature of all texts, and should not be confused with the "influence" that one text can have on (an)other text(s), but should be located entirely with the reader:

L'intertextuel dans lequel est pris tout texte, puisqu'il est lui-même l'entre-texte d'un autre texte ne peut se confondre avec quelque origine du texte, rechercher les "sources," les "influences" d'une œuvre, c'est satisfaire au mythe de la filiation; les citations dont est fait un texte sont anonymes, irréperables, et, cependant, *déjà lues*: ce sont des citations sans guillemets. (Barthes 1984: 76)⁵

⁵ Barthes' use of the terms "citations sans guillemets" reminds us of a type of rewriting which is not treated in this discussion, but which will come up in Chapters Four and Five, namely plagiarism. Plagiarism can obviously be considered a rewriting, but as it is a practice by which the rewriter appropriates, by copying literally or by paraphrasing, another writing, while making it appear as something he created, it cannot be aligned with rewritings which make no such (implicit or explicit) claim of property.

For Barthes, the “citations” to which he alludes need no quotation marks: they occur within the dissemination of the text, which is always already becoming another text. The importance of Barthes’ concept of intertextuality is therefore also that it allows one to see the original and the translation as links in a continuous chain of intertextuality, where it doesn’t matter so much which comes first, because, though the original may be the first-comer from a purely temporal perspective, the “debt” from which the original derives its status is irretrievable and thus undefinable:

Nous savons maintenant qu’un texte n’est pas fait d’une ligne de mots ... mais un espace à dimensions multiples, où se marient et se contestent des écritures variées, dont aucune n’est originelle: le texte est un tissu de citations, issues de mils foyers de la culture. (Barthes 1984: 67)

Another author who has realized the importance of the multiple “voices” within a text is Bakhtin. Bakhtin’s idea of intertextuality is slightly different, more discourse-oriented than Barthes’: Bakhtin concentrates more on the language(s) in which the text is written, the “discourse” of the text. However, Bakhtin still guides one in the same direction as Barthes did. In describing the development of medieval parodies, Bakhtin demonstrates how, from an intertextual perspective, literary writing can be seen as a crossroads of present and previously written discourse, reminding one of the medieval habit of quoting without quotation marks. Bakhtin shows how this entailed that:

Les frontières entre “sa” parole et celle “d’autrui” étaient fragiles, équivoques, souvent tortueuses et confuses à dessein. (Bakhtin 1978: 425)

The continuing habit of rewriting something that has already been written is what constitutes writing, and for Bakhtin, it follows that literary style is never unique or original:

N’importe quel hybride stylistique délibéré est, dans une certaine mesure, dialogisé. Ceci implique que les langages qui s’y entrecroisent sont corrélatifs, sont les répliques d’un dialogue; c’est une dispute entre langages, entre styles du langage. (Bakhtin 1978: 431)

According to Barthes and Bakhtin, intertextuality thus stands for the way in which language, discourse and text flow over from one into another – for Barthes because every reader is a disseminator, for Bakhtin because language and style, or the discourses which constitute text, are always a crossing-over of already existing discourses. More recently (than Barthes and Bakhtin) Kaisa Koskinen also supports the view that intertextuality is more than literary influence or what John Haynes has erroneously termed “how all texts implicitly allude to one another” (Haynes 1989: 247) – stating instead that:

As well as signs, the texts, too, get their meanings through their relations to other texts. And, similar to signs, their meanings cannot be reduced to one singular entity. Intertextuality is thus much more profound than mere stylistic similarities or allusions. It is an essential quality of texts. (Koskinen 1994: 448)

Evidently, intertextuality is also of importance for our perception of the relationship between original and translation, and this is not overlooked by Koskinen:

The endless intertextuality and the plurality of meanings give no preference or primacy to the first-come. (Koskinen 1994: 449)

From an intertextual perspective, then, the original and the translation, but also the translation and other rewritings, stand in a relationship that is no longer necessarily hierarchical, but that corresponds to how all texts, in a way, relate to each other. It will shortly be demonstrated how such a perspective also allows a broadening of the object of investigation to include the rewritings (or para-texts) which accompany translations.

1.2.4. The *Translatio* of Texts

As indicated earlier, the significance of an understanding of translation as equal with other types of rewriting is also noted by Antoine Berman. Berman reminds one of the original meaning of the Latin *translatio* from which the French term “translation” in the sense of “transfer” is derived, and with which the term “traduction” is linked (Berman 1995: 17). In Latin, *translatio* generally means “a carrying or removing from one place to another, a transporting, transferring” (Lewis & Short 1975: 1802), and Berman indicates that a text can be moved from the literary system in and for which it was written to “somewhere else” (e.g. to a different culture) through all kinds of processes of transformation that are not necessarily what Jakobson defined as “translation proper,” in the sense of “interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language” (Jakobson 1992 [1959]: 145). Berman’s view is reminiscent of the position which Jakobson held with regards to translation, and which distinguishes “intralingual translation or rewording” from “interlingual translation or translation proper” and “intersemiotic translation or transmutation” (by which Jakobson understood “an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems”) (Jakobson 1992 [1959]: 145). Jakobson’s use of the term “translation” for these three activities, and Berman’s use of the French term “translation” instead of “traduction,” both indicate that a “translation,” which can now be called a rewriting, can take place in different ways: from transforming a text by putting it into another language, the French term “translation” thus also covers adaptation, summary, commentary, etc. With this understanding in mind, Berman points to the need for T.S. to be concerned with these other forms of *translatio*, forms with which Jakobson’s “translation proper” (the French “traduction”) is so inextricably bound together. Berman therefore sees the field of T.S. as:

... un espace plus vaste, celui de la *translation* d’une œuvre étrangère dans une langue-culture. Cette translation n’advient pas qu’avec la traduction. Elle advient aussi par la critique et de nombreuses formes de transformations textuelles (ou même non textuelles) qui ne sont pas traductives. *L’ensemble constitue la translation d’une œuvre*. Il y a une dialectique entre les translations non traductives et les traductions. On peut

considérer qu'une œuvre n'est vraiment "transplantée" et "implantée" (ce qui ne veut pas dire: intégrée, naturalisée) que lorsqu'elle est traduite *strictu sensu* (et non, par exemple, adaptée). Mais une traduction ne se déploie et n'agit vraiment dans cette langue-culture que si elle est étayée et entourée par des travaux critiques et des translations non traductives. (Berman 1995: 17-18)

These insights, combined with an awareness of the intertextual texture of texts, or, less alliteratively, of the unstable and disseminating nature of texts, naturally leads to a changed perspective on the relationship between an original and its translation(s), and between the original, the translation and other, related rewritings, and leads to the realisation that an assessment or evaluation of a translation can legitimately broaden its scope and include as object of study not only the translation and the original, but also these other rewritings, which form a part of the whole process of *translatio*.

The consideration of other rewritings which at some point accompany a translation is a very important point for the present study, since in this case the rewritings accompanying both the original and the translation have had an enormous impact on the reading of these texts, especially in the target culture. The analyses in Chapters Seven and Eight will therefore often be prompted by, based on or supported by elements found in the large amount of rewritings that has surrounded the Baudelaire translations, and also Poe's original texts. Lefevere's views on translation further justify this strategy, because in spite of being less explicit with regards to the "need" which inhabits the original, as a result of the tension between translatability and untranslatability inherent in the original, Lefevere does recognize the need of the original for translation and criticism, in order to ensure its continued life (and possibly, canonization). Like Benjamin, Lefevere thus also establishes the symbiotic link between the continued life of an original and its rewritings, be they translation, criticism or even interpretation and reading in academic surroundings:

It is through critical refraction that a text establishes itself in a given system. ... It is through translation combined with critical refraction (introductions, notes, commentary accompanying the translation, articles

on it) that a work of literature produced outside a given system takes its place in that “new” system. It is through refractions in the social system’s educational set-up that canonization is achieved and, more importantly, maintained. (Lefevere 1982: 17)

An important consequence of the way in which a literary system handles rewritings, is that a culture’s habits of and criteria for rewriting (including translation) reflect its habits of reading and vice versa, a given culture’s habits of reading will be reflected in the kind of rewritings it produces. In other words, rewritings naturally carry the hallmarks of the receiving culture’s dominant ideologies and poetics, and are therefore sometimes preferred over the originals because they make for a more familiar reading. In this way a rewriting sometimes becomes the permanent and unique source of reference for further rewriters to determine the nature and contents of a certain text, and can thus come to replace the original entirely. In the case of a translation, this can coincide with, precede or follow the canonization of the rewriting into the target culture; in fact, it is often part and parcel of that process.

Moreover, a dynamics of self-perpetuation can be distinguished which goes hand in hand with the nature of the process by which a certain text gains an image or a reputation through rewriting, especially when this rewriting gives it a status that allows further rewriters to ignore the link which exists between their own rewriting and the preceding one. Such a perpetuation of the *image* of Baudelaire’s translations of Poe has certainly taken place in France, and what role the rewritings which have surrounded these translations have played, will become clear during the pre-analytical enquiries (Chapters Four, Five and Six) and the critical analyses (Chapters Seven and Eight). The result, in any case, of this self-perpetuating image for the reading of Poe in France, is that famous academics such as Jacques Lacan, though claiming to discuss and analyse a story by Poe, have dealt with Poe’s fiction in essays which hardly refer to the original text at all, and have based their interpretations of “what Poe wrote” uniquely on the words and sentences of Baudelaire’s translations.⁶ The question that obviously begs to be

⁶ The essay in question is Jacques Lacan’s “Seminar on “The Purloined Letter,” which was followed up by a series of post-structuralist replies and rewritings, including Derrida’s “Le facteur

asked is whether one can make truthful statements about the nature of an author's work on the basis of a rewriting of that work, and without ever consulting the original version of that work, thus grounding one's conclusions solely on a text that is already one or two refractions away from the original, and contains elements that do not belong to the author of the original, but to the reader/translator/rewriter?

Such issues show that while it is appropriate to recognize the likeness and inter-relatedness between translation and rewriting, it is also important to retain the distinction between the different *types* of rewriting. As indicated previously, the first condition for a rewriting to be valid is that it admits its status as rewriting, and secondly, any rewriting that makes a claim as being a rewriting should be clear about *which text* it rewrites, and if this clarity is lacking, the text should be treated with due suspicion. Misinterpretation on the basis of a rewriting happens easily, and as the discussion of some of the rewritings accompanying Baudelaire's translations will bear out, this can be extremely persistent once it is "out there," and can therefore have serious consequences for the general image of the text, its author and its rewriter.

1.2.5. The Importance of Para-Text

With this description of what underlies a view of translation as rewriting, the reader has gradually been guided towards one of the main consequences of this view, which can be combined with Derrida's statement that "il n'y a pas de hors-texte" (cf. *supra*). If one can put translation on a par with other types of rewriting, then this means that the other rewritings, which, as will be shown in Chapter Two, are in the same way subject to ideology and forces of patronage as translations, are just as relevant for our understanding of an author's and a translator's intentions as the source and target texts themselves. An adequate name for these rewritings in the case of translation is "para-text," and an evaluation of the

de la vérité," all appearing together in *The Purloined Poe – Lacan, Derrida and Psychoanalytic Reading* (Muller & Richardson 1988).

importance of para-text for T.S. is highly relevant for this particular study – as its title also suggests. Several authors confirm, through their own projects, the proposition that the life of a translation and the story of the dialogic relation that exists between the translation and the original does not run solely through the bare texts that constitute the original and the translation, but also through the para-texts that have surrounded this relationship.

Para-textual elements in translation are all those pieces of writing – notes, prefaces, illustrations, contents tables, etc – that accompany a text but that are not a part of its “body.” Sherry Simon, for instance, states that:

... para-textual elements in translations – the peripheral matter which accompanies the texts of translations – are useful tools in analysing the constructed subject of translations in its various historical forms.
(Simon 1990: 111)

Spivak, whose Translator’s Preface introduces *Of Grammatology*, says of her own and other prefaces:

A written preface provisionally localizes the place where, between reading and reading, book and book, the inter-inscribing of “reader(s),” “writer(s),” and language is forever at work. ... In Derrida’s reworking, the structure preface-text becomes open at both ends. The text has no stable identity, no stable origin, no stable end. Each act of reading the “text” is a preface to the text. (Spivak 1997: xii)

As the accompaniment of a translation, para-text can be investigated synchronically – as a clue to the present reading that can inform a translation – and in the case of an historical translation, para-text can also be considered diachronically, as a clue to explaining the canonization of a translated text over a period of time. In many ways both approaches intermingle, but it is the synchronic approach which is the first movement, and it is also the only way in which Gérard Genette, who coined the concept, studied para-texts. In a book called *Seuils* (translated into English under the title *Para-texts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Genette 1987 and 1997)), Genette gives us what has been called “a virtual *Gray’s Anatomy* of the liminal spaces of the book” (Watts 2000: 30). It is a synchronic

study in which Genette labels, categorizes and describes the functions of all para-textual elements – “seuil” means threshold, and the title indicates that these para-texts are thresholds which the reader crosses as he approaches the main body of the text. Para-texts are thus considered to play an important part in orienting and guiding the reader in his reading and by extension, the translator in his translation.

Genette, however, does not discuss para-text around translations, except in a note, and this is surprising considering the frequency with which translations carry para-text, especially notes and prefaces. Here is the note (which contains all of Genette’s comments on para-text around translation):

En cas de traduction, la préface peut être, comme on vient de la voir, signée du traducteur. Le traducteur-préfacier peut éventuellement commenter, entre autres, sa propre traduction; sur ce point et en ce sens, sa préface cesse donc d’être allographe. (Genette 1987: 243)

This description is indeed too “anatomic” to be efficient: most translators’ prefaces are probably both allographic and auctorial. Spivak’s preface to *Of Grammatology* contains both allographic and auctorial passages, but some prefaces are entirely allographic, as for instance Baudelaire’s famous preface to the *Histoires extraordinaires*.

The importance of para-text, then, is to reveal not only the strategies of the translator, but also the way in which a translation is read and received by the reading audiences. An important type of para-text is what Genette calls “public epitext,” which involves anything the translator or another commentator (academic, critic, teacher) may have to say about the original or the translation. It is in these para-texts that one will find what has been called the “pre-text”:

... the cultural assumptions that largely determine the success or failure of a translated text in the target culture, and which have almost nothing to do with the quality of the translation itself. (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990: 10)

Zlateva makes the point that it is often the “image” of a text or translation, and not so much the text itself, which ensures it a place in the receiving culture:

Any adequately translated text becomes a material fact not only in the target language, but in the target literature as well: it exists in both. The fact of its existence and acceptability in the target language, however, does not necessarily imply that it is, or will be, immediately accepted in the target literature and culture. This is a different matter altogether. It has to do with the translator's choice of a particular work at a particular time, with the core and periphery of the target cultural and literary tradition at that particular moment, and with several other factors. In short, it pertains to considerations located both on the level of pre-text and post-text. (Zlateva 1990: 29)

It will become clear in this study that para-text has played a primordial role in influencing the nature and the success of the Baudelaire translations, and a lot of the para-text to the Baudelaire translations is a continuing testimony of how:

... literature reaches those who are not its professional students much more by way of the "images" constructed of it in translations, but even more so in anthologies, commentaries, histories and, occasionally, critical journals, than it does so by means of "originals," however venerable they may be ... It is therefore extremely important that the "image" of a literature and the works that constitute it be studied alongside its reality. This, we submit, is where the future of "translation studies" lies. (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990: 9-10)

1.3. Conclusions

Lefevere's theory of refraction shows that translation can be put on a par with, but must remain differentiated from other acts of rewriting like adaptation or commentary. Moreover, the adoption of the concept of intertextuality, whether seen from Barthes' or Bakhtin's perspective, has two major consequences: the original is no longer a closed-off entity, and the rewritings that accompany the original and the translation are part and parcel of the texture of the original and the translation. A view of translation as rewriting thus has a number of interesting implications, and is in itself a direct consequence of the post-structuralist idea that the original text is not a stable entity, and that it is already a rewriting. The original text is marked by a necessity which is a result of the tension between

translatability and untranslatability, and it is this tension which gives rise to the desire for translation or rewriting in general.

Resisting and at the same time acknowledging the distinction between the different types of rewriting, one is thus brought to consider the term *translatio* as covering all these types of rewriting, which also allows one to place the study of a particular translation in a wider framework, as the study of all the ways in which a text has been rewritten. The important observation to be made at this point is that in post-structuralist theory, the translator is clearly not considered as an author, but has the status and role of reader and disseminator. Though post-structuralist theory has declared the “death” of the author, its application in Translation Studies is thus not really affected by this principle, and one can look at the translator from a very different perspective, as the *locus* of the intertextual relations established by both target and source texts. Moreover, the type of reading which has marked a translation will inevitably also mark the other types of rewriting that a translator will produce on a given “original” text. This realisation further raises the awareness on the importance of the study of para-textual materials, and in the case of the Baudelaire translations, it will become clear that these were of primordial importance to reveal the aims and strategies of the translator. Para-text thus becomes an indispensable source of information on the nature of the readings that have informed the translation, and on the kind of readings that have accompanied it throughout its life as an independent text

Chapter Two: Translation Studies and Translation Criticism

2.1. Introduction

Having given the philosophical perspective in which this study is grounded, it now seems necessary to define the field of Translation Studies in which it can be situated, to discuss the current state of that discipline, and to show how T.S. deals with some of the issues which continue to puzzle and excite translation scholars and which are relevant for the investigations that are carried out in this study. In this chapter the term “Translation Criticism” will be proposed for the activity which will constitute the applied part of this study, and this choice of method will now be justified, and will be further explained in Chapter Three.

Throughout the times and ages, scholars, often in the business of translation themselves, have written and philosophised about their experiences in translation. Translation Studies has become a discipline in its own right, with an immensely rich heritage of writings that are a mix of philosophical, linguistic, sociological, cultural (literary, poetic, aesthetic, etc), and political ingredients. Indeed, as Barnstone confirms, there is a panoply of *éminences grises* who have written about the interdisciplinary field that is Translation Studies:

... we have important writings by Horace, Quintilian, Jerome, Du Bellay, Tytler, Dryden, Pope, Goethe, Herder, Arnold, Croce, Benjamin, Ortega, Wittgenstein, Jakobson, Derrida, Steiner and Eco. (Barnstone 1993: 6)

For the translation scholar it is thus necessary to locate himself and his project within the totality of the field, because the variety of authors obviously reflects a variety of angles and opinions, not all of them relevant for the project at hand. A mapping of the field of Translation Studies therefore seems appropriate, and in order to present a complete picture, the reader's attention is called to what has been called the “cultural turn” in Translation Studies. Recent theory, including

post-structuralist theory, sees translation more and more as a cultural transfer, involving cultural, social, political, ideological and economic factors. The debate thus also has an ethical component, as translation scholars are uncovering political – and sometimes demonstrably euro-centric or even neo-colonial – attitudes that underlie not only translation strategies but the theory in itself.

The trend towards a wider perspective is not new, and now pervades most of the theory in the field. Venuti, for instance, announces in his introduction to *Rethinking Translation – Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology* that:

... analysis of translation can also include its ideological and institutional determinations, resulting in detailed studies that situate the translated text in its social and historical circumstances and consider its cultural political role. (Venuti 1992: 10)

The “Canadian school” attests to the same awareness with people like Barbara Folkart, Annie Brisset or Gillian Lane-Mercier:

... the translating process produces not only semantic meaning, but also aesthetic, ideological and political meaning. Such meaning is indicative, amongst other things, of the translator’s position within the socio-ideological stratifications of his or her cultural context. (Lane-Mercier 1997: 44)

2.2. Toury’s Mapping of the Field: D.T.S. vs. T.C.

The cultural turn in Translation Studies gained momentum from the 1970’s onwards with the development of Even-Zohar’s Polysystem theory, and the scholars who adopted this are often referred to as the Tel-Aviv school. The first mapping of Translation Studies to picture a more culturally oriented discipline is James Holmes’ (see Baker 1998: 278), and this map is reproduced, albeit in an altered version, by Gideon Toury, Even-Zohar’s disciple and the main representative of Polysystem theory today. Holmes’ map (Toury 1995: 10, or Baker 1998: 278) divides the field of Translation Studies in two main branches: “pure” translation studies and “derived” translation studies. The “pure” translation

studies are those which describe translational phenomena and develop principles for their description. This branch includes “Descriptive Translation Studies” (D.T.S.), a term which is now used by Toury to designate his interpretation of Even-Zohar’s approach. In the “applied” branch of Holmes’ map one finds “translator training” and “translation aids” (by which one is to understand oral and written resources, such as dictionaries), and also “translation criticism.”

Toury’s reproduction of Holmes’ map, however, shows significant differences from its original version: in Toury’s rewriting, the link between the pure and the applied branches is a one-way street – with traffic going from the pure branches into the applied ones, but not vice-versa. For Toury, it seems, the pure studies can inform and provide tools and principles for the applied branches, but translator training or criticism cannot inform the more theoretical branches. As Mona Baker has also noticed, this was not the initial layout of Holmes’ map:

Moreover, by contrast to Holmes’ insistence on the dialectical relationship between all three areas, Toury seems to see the relationship between the theoretical and descriptive translation studies on the one hand and what he calls the “Applied extensions” of the discipline on the other as strictly unidirectional. (Baker 1998: 278)

Toury does not really discuss translation criticism, at least not in his latest and most conclusive work of 1995 in which the adaptation of Holmes’ model appears, and his explanation of what he is ignoring and why he is ignoring it is limited to defining the relationship that this branch could have with the discipline he designates by the name “Descriptive Translation Studies.” What is problematic is that when discussing this relationship Toury does not hesitate to give the otherwise undefined translation criticism a determinedly prescriptive character:

In contrast to the two ‘Pure’ branches of Translation Studies, which are *theoretical* and *descriptive*, respectively, its applied extensions cannot be anything but *prescriptive*, even if they are brought closer to reality, as is the aspiration here, and even if their pluralism and tolerance are enhanced. (Toury 1995: 19)

As this study applies, following Antoine Berman (Berman 1995), the term “Translation Criticism” to describe the activities which constitute the analysis and evaluation of the Baudelaire translations, some justification seems required. As Toury’s treatment of it already indicates, Translation Criticism is definitely not a popular term. Berman, who takes an exceptional position in stating that Translation Studies essentially *is* Translation Criticism, recognizes that there is a negative quality to criticism, but indicates that this is only one side of the coin. He cites Walter Benjamin to support this description of criticism to which he attributes:

... une dualité inscrite *dans la structure même de l’acte critique*. ... Benjamin a parlé de “l’inévitable moment négatif de ce concept.” ... Mais cela ne doit pas faire oublier que, non moins essentiellement, ce travail négatif est l’autre face d’un travail positif. (Berman 1995: 38)

Still, the term criticism, possibly because of this partly negative content, is anathematized by most scholars in T.S., especially those who come to the field from linguistics. Some light therefore needs to be shed on what the discipline of Translation Criticism is or could be, why this term has been chosen for the present study and analysis of the Baudelaire translations, and to which activities it can be taken to apply.

2.3. Translation Criticism: From Translation Quality Assessment to Critical Evaluation

The first problem one faces when trying to find a proper way to describe an existing translation is the fact that merely descriptive tools are not sufficient: one can *describe* Baudelaire’s translations from a variety of different perspectives, including a para-textual perspective, but there will always be questions that involve more than mere description and that demand interpretation and critical evaluation. As Susan Bassnett states:

There is, of course, one final great stumbling block waiting for the person with an interest in Translation Studies: the question of *evaluation*. For if a translator perceives his or her role as partly that of “improving” either the SL text or existing translations, and that is indeed often the reason why we undertake translations, an implicit value judgment underlies this position. (Bassnett-McGuire 1991: 8-9)

Though the idea of a translator setting out to translate a work with the intention of improving it is not the stereotypical attitude which Bassnett here seems to suggest, the fact remains that criticism naturally involves evaluation. Translation Criticism is, then, a type of evaluation or assessment, but an evaluation of a translation does not necessarily imply the prescriptiveness that Toury ascribed to it. Moreover, critical evaluation should also be distinguished from the quality assessment on which it is usually based and which helps it to be formulated.

Juliane House (House 1997) re-proposes a model to assess the quality of a translation, which the author developed over twenty years ago. In House’s approach, the quality of a particular translation is assessed and evaluated on the basis of textual and linguistic criteria:

The model ... is based on the assumption that translation is a linguistic phenomenon (in the Hallidayan sense of linguistics), and the linguistic analyses provide a basis for judgment and grounds for arguing an evaluative judgment – which, in fact, means that there is less an opposition between analysis and judgment, rather *the latter follows from the former*. (House 1997: 118 – my italics)

House is thus mainly concerned with translation as a linguistic process, and it is a logical step for her to propose that linguistic analyses should precede value judgments. Similar frameworks have been introduced elsewhere (e.g. Hatim and Mason 1990), and though House’s model is very valuable for the assessment of the textual and linguistic features of a translation, it is not sufficiently encompassing for the purposes of the present study. Indeed House states that her model “provides for the analysis of the discursal as well as the situational cultural particularities of the source and target *texts*,” (House 1997: 29 – my italics), which implies that the whole model is kept on a *textual* pragmatic level.

What the model does not provide for, then, is a description of “the many factors that cannot be controlled by the translator and have nothing to do with translation as a *linguistic* procedure or with the translator’s linguacultural competence” (House 1997: 119), which in itself is not a fault for a model that calls itself linguistic-functional.

The “socio-political or even ideological constraints” (ibid.) affecting translation are thus not ignored or overlooked, but the model is not elaborated to accommodate their systematic description and remains purely text-based, with a definition of text that limits the object of investigation to the source and target texts, and explicitly excludes para-texts. What is more, in the course of her very brief discussion on Deconstructionist (what has been called “post-structuralist”) approaches in T.S., House states unambiguously that within a post-structuralist approach to translation as rewriting, translation assessors would be unable to distinguish between translation and, for instance, plagiarism, and claims that “The boundaries between translation and other text-transforming activities should be drawn clearly and as objectively as possible.” (House 1997: 9). However, this sentence in itself indicates House’s agreement, at least, that translation is a text-transforming activity among “other” text-transforming activities. The element that is lacking from House’s discussion here is an acknowledgement of the possibility of a double bind, i.e. of simultaneously rejecting and taking into account the distinction between different types of rewriting. Moreover, House’s apprehension at confusing translation (and other types of rewriting) with plagiarism is unnecessary, since the distinction does not lie in the *type* of rewriting, but in the acknowledgement that it *is* a rewriting. As indicated previously, plagiarism is distinguishable by virtue of the fact that, unlike all other types of rewriting, it does not acknowledge its “being-rewriting.”

Although House, on the basis of each quality assessment, allows for a distinction between what she calls an *overt* translation (a translation where “the function of the translation is to enable its readers access to the function of the original in its original linguacultural setting through another language” (House 1997: 29)), and a

covert translation (“the function of a covert translation is to imitate the original’s function in a different discourse frame” (House 1997: 29)), her model does not define the criteria or descriptive tools to systematically explain *why* the translator has opted for a particular position on the scale between those two opposite poles. The model House proposes thus remains purely descriptive and textual-linguistic, and though its creator is imbued with an awareness of the importance of meta-linguistic and meta-textual factors in translation, she does not offer a matrix that can systematise a description of the ideological and cultural underpinnings of the translator’s position and consequential strategies. It may be added, moreover, that a model such as the one proposed by House consists of methods of analysis and insights which a linguist (and, one may venture, a trained translator), who possesses the analytical tools necessary for a qualitative assessment of any text on a textual, stylistic and pragmatic level, has no trouble in adopting, not to say, in the case of the linguist, that these descriptive tools are an intrinsic part of his competence as analyst of discourse, and therefore a part of his capacity to correctly assess the stylistic and linguistic characteristics of texts. Linguistic models such as House’s therefore remain very valuable tools, but by not including guidelines for a description of the translator and of the factors that determine his overall position as a rewriter, the evaluation of a literary translation is only carried half-way. That is why a model for translation quality assessment, which claims to “... lay(s) open the many factors that might theoretically have influenced the translator in making certain decisions and rejecting others” (House 1997: 118), will not be complete until it includes an explicit method of “laying open” these “factors” more directly and systematically.

Within the approach adopted for this study, judgments and evaluations will of course be based on textual and linguistic analyses. However, as the discussion on para-textual materials has already indicated, these analyses will also be prompted by observations derived from meta-textual and para-textual data. In other words, a translation critic can combine his value judgments formed on the basis of the linguistic and textual analyses he has carried out (as proposed in House’s work, for instance), with value judgments that are not necessarily of immediate

linguistic or textual relevance, but which allow him to better discern the ideological position of the translator, and which can in turn trigger his interest in a particular textual-linguistic feature, which means that the order of investigation followed by House can and will also be reversed.

House's position on the kind of values which an evaluation or quality assessment should attribute, however, is fully adequate and can be maintained just as firmly in an expanded model:

... the evaluator is not put in a position to give easy judgments of "good" or "bad" in translation. Rather, the model prepares the ground for the analysis of a large number of evaluation cases that would in any individual case, not be totally predictable. (House 1997: 118)

House thus seems to invite her readers to see her model as a matrix that permits positing a translation on a scale of "successful" or "unsuccessful" linguistic and textual transfer, and indicates a necessity to move beyond her own model and into a wider field, which she no longer calls translation quality assessment, but ... translation criticism:

As a field of inquiry translation criticism will always have to move from a macro-analytical focus to a micro-analytical one, from considerations of ideology, function, genre, register to the communicative value of individual linguistic units in order to establish the reconstruction of the translator's choices and his decision processes in as objective a manner as possible. This is a highly probabilistic undertaking. (House 1997: 119)

The reader may be reminded that this "undertaking" is inevitably "probabilistic" within a model that does not include the reverse order of investigation, and that does not provide the tools to describe what it calls "macro-level" factors. However, Berman's method, which will be adopted in this study, does present such guidelines, and the macro-level factors affecting Baudelaire's position as a translator will therefore be taken into account "in as objective a manner as possible." Berman's guidelines presuppose a continuous to and fro between macro- and micro-analytical levels, and the value judgments thus yielded should therefore be all the more equiponderate, since they will take into account in a

systematic manner a maximum number of factors that may have influenced the translator's decisions on a broader meta-textual level, and at the same time allow for as detailed a description as possible of the textual and linguistic features that may be a reflection of his overall position.

Within this enlarged evaluative framework, and in full agreement with House's position, the classical criteria and notions of "good" or "bad" will also be replaced, and the values that take their place are pervaded by an awareness of the *context* of a translation. The pendulum swings back and forth between purely textual and linguistic features of the translation and meta-textual issues like the reception of the translation in the target culture, the state of the target literature, the place the translator occupies in this literature, the philosophies of translation extant in that target literature, the motivation of the translator's choice of text, etc. In order to be in a position to evaluate and explain a particular decision in translation, and especially any decision that is not prompted solely and unambiguously by the text of the original, one needs to gather the information that can help one interpret that decision. The values of "good" and "bad" can be replaced by "appropriate" or "inappropriate" *for a particular instance*, which means that these terms are not used with reference to some abstract measure of appropriateness or equivalence, but specifically, "for this or that context." It is reassuring that a model that is as empirical as House's, at the end of the day, adopts the same relativising position:

If one refrains from giving prescriptive, dogmatic and global judgments rather than reveal exactly where and with what consequences and possibly why a translation in an individual case is what it is in relation to its original, one proves that one has some respect both for the subject of translation and the translator. (House 1997: 119)

Nonetheless, it should be stated at this point that no approach in translation assessment seems able to escape, at some point during the positing of its criteria or during its evaluation proper, a certain measure of prescriptiveness – even those, like Berman's, which insist most strongly that prescriptiveness should be avoided

with the utmost effort. This issue will be further discussed at the end of this chapter.

2.4. The Necessity of Translation Criticism

Before going into more detail on the culturally oriented perspectives which have enlarged the field of Translation Studies, the link between the necessity of translation and the necessity of Translation Criticism needs to be highlighted, and the choice of method further justified. If, as explained in the previous chapter, translation and criticism are both acts of rewriting, this would mean that, if translation is considered to be a necessary activity, so can criticism of translation:

On sait que la traduction n'est pas moins nécessaire aux œuvres – à leur manifestation, à leur accomplissement, à leur perpétuation, à leur circulation – que la critique, sans parler du fait qu'elle possède une nécessité empirique plus évidente. (Berman 1995: 40)

If translation is a response to a need in the original, it follows equally that translation criticism is a response to a need in the translation it discusses. Bassnett and Lefevere go a few steps further in alluding to the necessary nature of rewriting (be it criticism or translation):

One might even take the next step and say that if a work is not “rewritten” in one way or another, it is not likely to survive its publication date by all that many years, or even months. (Bassnett & Lefevere 1990: 10)

Many writings *have* survived on their own and without being rewritten for centuries, but Bassnett and Lefevere are probably alluding to a certain tendency, already discussed in Chapter One, in which a work produced by an unknown author will inevitably have to be accompanied or introduced by some rewriting that situates the author and the work. The necessity of rewriting, then, is not an absolute, though the critical evaluation of a translation can in many ways reveal itself as a necessary activity. A case like the Baudelaire translations, with its large number of allographic and auctorial footnotes accompanying the translations, and

which was produced under an historically different ideology and poetics, by virtue of its current monopoly on the market of French translations of Poe's fiction, automatically invites the question why this translation (and not any other) has survived so well and for such a long time. Moreover, in such cases criticism can take its role one step further and reach the positive and productive stage alluded to by Berman, when it can point to the necessity of replacing translations that are assessed and deemed unsatisfactory in a contemporary perspective. Translation Criticism thus serves not only the original and the translation, but also the target literature, and in more general terms, literature and language in general.

Because of this larger purpose, and in order to be taken seriously as a discipline in its own right, Translation Criticism should be rigorous in its methods, its applications and its theoretical foundations, as Berman says in *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne* (the title of the book hopefully says enough about Berman's position):

Si nous estimons que la critique littéraire est essentielle à la vie des œuvres (et de la lecture qui est un moment de cette vie), nous devons considérer, sur le fondement de ce qui a été dit, que la critique des traductions l'est tout autant, et donc accorder à cette partie de la critique tout le sérieux que l'on accorde à celle relative aux œuvres.
(Berman 1995: 43)

After this brief statement of the necessary nature of Translation Criticism, the other sources in T.S. which form the background against which a defence of Translation Criticism can be drawn up further, can now be explored.

2.5. The "Cultural Turn" in Translation Studies

This section will begin with a discussion of two approaches which have emerged since Translation Studies took its "cultural turn," before looking at how problematic issues like equivalence, literalism and fluency are perceived in the light of these new perspectives. The discussion begins with Gideon Toury, whose mapping of the discipline was introduced above. The most recent book proposing

an approach in T.S. which involves Polysystem theory is Toury's *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*. This approach will now be briefly discussed and those aspects which justify a rejection of Toury's appropriation of the term "Descriptive Translation Studies" and support for Translation Criticism will be illuminated.

2.5.1. Polysystem Theory

In a few words, Toury's work can be described as a proposal to form a framework of probabilistic laws or universals of cultural transfer as applied to translation. It looks for "a recurring translational solution, not just within one culture but also beyond and across linguistic and cultural boundaries" (Toury 1995: 110-111) which "thus accumulated could very well yield hypotheses which may even bear on translation theory itself" (Toury 1995: 111). What Toury promises is a theory where the findings of certain case studies (such as, for instance, the translation of Shakespeare's Sonnets into Hebrew and its function in the literary system of the target culture) are extrapolated to universals which in turn supply the basis for a universal theory, and even for a universal model of translation strategies, which Toury calls "Laws of Translational Behaviour":

One objective of using such findings may well be to model one's future strategies on actual translation behaviour, past or present.
(Toury 1995: 111)

Toury's operation is thus doubly deductive: from case study to universals, and from universals to theory (and, possibly, from theory back to "actual translation behaviour"), and the constraining consequences of this level of abstraction have been felt by most of the scholars who initially followed and then questioned Toury's and Even-Zohar's positions. As will now be shown:

Polysystem theory ... as another kind of structuralism, limits that which it can conceptualise. (Gentzler 1993: 139)

Though it is true that every theory or methodology starts out by limiting what it can conceptualise, the constraints of Toury's theory are far-reaching and fundamentally euro-centric. "Literary polysystem" is a term coined by Even-Zohar in the 1970s, which divides the literary system of a culture into a centre and a periphery, into a "high" and "low" literature, placing translation firmly in the suburban branches of the polysystem. The centre-periphery logic is not based on any real and recurring facts but is derived from occidental development theories of the nineteen-sixties and seventies (for instance those developed by Raul Prebisch). They result in a strongly euro-centric view of culture and are thus a continuation of Derrida's chain of phonocentrism-logocentrism-eurocentrism, which was discussed in Chapter One. Berman rejects the peripheral status of translation in the polysystem, and criticizes Toury for it:

Ces schémas révèlent en outre qu'en ce qui concerne le rôle de la "littérature traduite," l'école de Tel-Aviv partage acritiquement les préjugés régnants sur sa "secondarité." *Importante, mais seconde*, cet axiome commun à tous les historiens des littératures est, ici, pour comble, transformé en *loi*. (Berman 1995: 54)

What constitutes Toury's approach, namely a desire for "norms" or "laws," is thus also its biggest shortcoming, and this is not only because of the peripheral status attributed to translation, but because of the nature of Toury's comparative applications from which he derives these norms.

In the last chapter of *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, entitled "Towards Laws of Translational Behaviour," Toury explains that his laws are not rules which he thinks translators should follow (though, as was just noted, he does think they "may well" serve as a model for future translation behaviour), they are not prescriptive, but they are indications of what is likely to happen in a given set of circumstances. An example of such a law is the "the law of growing standardization" (Toury 1995: 267) of which the "alternative formulation" sounds as follows:

Translations tend to assume a *peripheral* position in the target system, generally employing secondary models and serving as a major factor of conservatism. (Toury 1995: 272)

This law is “supported” by a comparative example which raises serious questions. As Gentzler points out, in previous works Toury had already arrived at his translation laws “by *comparatively* examining several translations of one original text carried out in different periods by various translators” (Gentzler 1993: 131). However, say Gentzler “Toury *also* posits the necessity of an ideal “invariant of comparison” which underlies the text in question and his entire theory in general” (Gentzler 1993: 131) – Toury called this *tertium comparationis* “a *hypothetical entity* constructable on the basis of a systemic (textemic) analysis of ST” (quoted in Gentzler 1993: 131), which comes down to:

... an ideal variant third text which is the “adequate translation,” not based on a comparison to the original and various historically bound texts, but on abstract linguistic and literary theory. (Gentzler 1993: 131)

In the 1980s, then, Toury’s comparative applications from which he deduced his “laws” already contained a methodological flaw: how can one found a theory about the integration of translations into the “literary polysystem” based on comparisons in which the invariant of comparison *does not exist* in the polysystem? One realizes that Toury’s definition of the polysystem is an abstraction which takes into consideration the possibility of an ideal translation and even an ideal text – otherwise, how could Toury speak of a centre and a periphery in a literary polysystem, if not by attributing to the centre of the centre the existence of some sort of ideal literary text? In this sense, with his use of an abstract and exemplary *tertium comparationis* Toury’s theory already pointed to a level of abstraction and idealization that made it difficult to apply to what happens in the real world.

The fallacy of the *tertium comparationis* still haunts Toury’s theory today. In *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* Toury no longer uses “hypothetical entities” – at the beginning of this book Toury even claims that:

What constitutes the subject matter of a proper discipline of Translation Studies is (observable or reconstructable) facts of real life, rather than merely speculative entities resulting from preconceived hypotheses and theoretical models. (Toury 1995: 1)

Toury's insouciance in using the terms "reconstructable" and "facts of real life" together, without further explanation as to how this "reconstruction" of facts would happen, is worrying in itself, but the relevant point here is that Toury thus indicates that he aims to use "real" data which have emerged in the literary polysystem. Not so: though Toury can be said to build his laws on "facts of real life," these are not facts that occur inside the literary polysystem as defined by Toury himself. The comparisons that appear in *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* are this time carried out between translations "supplied by advanced translation students" (Toury 1995: 269). The question has to be raised, then, as to where Toury situates the translations produced by a student in class: are these to be considered as representative of the same part of the "literary polysystem" as a translation produced "on the market," i.e. published and written by an experienced literary translator? By not answering this question, Toury maintains the hiatus between his theoretical claims and the applications on which they are said to be founded. The "literary polysystem" becomes a problematic concept not only because it continues to presuppose the existence of an "ideal" literary text, but also because Toury himself, when it comes to applying his theory, does not differentiate between texts produced outside of the polysystem, in an academic setting, and those produced inside of it, and which are aimed at a much wider market.

2.5.2. The Context-Specificity of Translation

Besides the problematic concept of polysystem, Polysystem theory is also severely diminished by its failure to recognise its own context-specificity, i.e. an awareness that it is, in its own turn, bound to the literary or academic context in which it was conceived. Berman pointedly observes that

Toury, dans son souci de parvenir à une traductologie scientifique, et même fonctionnelle, bâtit des schémas ou lois qui non seulement sont discutables historiquement, mais contredisent son propre “sens historique.” (Berman 1995: 54)

This problem, however, is avoided with our adoption of a view of criticism and translation as rewriting. One need not cede too much to historicism to understand that both translation and criticism are caught up in the same way in historically defined determinations. Relating the idea that criticism and translation are both acts of rewriting to the contextual specificity of translation entails that the translation critic is aware that, just as translation is entirely context-bound, so is his own activity. It can even be said that all norms, criteria, rules and laws are context-bound, and should be treated as such:

The trouble with standards, it would seem, is that they turn out not to be eternal and unchanging after all. Most writers on translation who come to the subject from linguistics appear to be unable to face this, probably because they are (still) caught up in the more positivistic aspects of linguistics – what Snell-Hornby calls its “scientistic” side. (Bassnett & Lefevere 1990: 3)

Toury, in wanting to construct an all-embracing, universal and closed framework of translational norms, has ignored this danger. Moreover, the contextual specificity of criticism and evaluation implies that even if Toury’s norms of translational behaviour were based on real translations, their function could still not go beyond being either proven applicable, or not. Neither does Toury indicate that there is a next step: to explain *why* the translator has opted for those strategies which put him either inside or outside of the framework of Toury’s norms. In that case, each law becomes a futile exercise in hypothesis building, and does not bring one any closer to understanding, let alone describing translators’ strategies.

Reluctance to adopt all of Polysystem theory is felt by translation scholars throughout the field, and this awareness has brought with it an increased insistence on the historicity of all rewriting, and on the multitude of factors that influence cultural choices. Venuti, for instance, states that “canons of accuracy are

culturally specific and historically variable” (Venuti 1995: 37), and underlines the political determinants that any rewriter should be wary of – in his case (that of a prolific English-Italian translator), Anglo-Saxon imperialism and euro-centrism (see Venuti 1995). Venuti is clearly aware that all critical categories and evaluative norms in T.S. need to be used with a sense of their relativity. Translation thus joins criticism in a discourse that is permeated by an awareness of its own historicity, and pervaded by an insistence (from a significant number of scholars in T.S.) that *there can be no universals in T.S.*:

For there is no universal canon according to which texts may be assessed. There are whole sets of canons that shift and change and each text is involved in a continuing dialectical relationship with those sets.
(Bassnett-McGuire 1991: 9)

Translation Criticism, at least a T.C. which remains fully conscious of the fact that it is rewriting, and therefore as context-specific as the text it rewrites, automatically escapes this desire for universality.

To close this discussion on Polysystem theory, one might follow the path chosen by those translation scholars who have fed on the polysystem source, but are re-evaluating it because they find it “too formalistic and restrictive” (Gentzler 1993: 139). There is, for instance, what has been called a “Belgian” group of Toury disciples who have inherited – and enriched – Toury’s interest in the conditions of the target culture:

It is the individual in the target literature who selects the texts that are to be imported, as well as the systems and sub-systems from which the texts will be selected. It is the receiving literature that determines the translational method and its function.
(Lambert et al. 1985: 150)

The innovation added by Lambert is “the individual” – Toury does not take into account individual choice – and also the interest in the source culture, which is not at all present in D.T.S. More examples of the adoption of aspects of D.T.S., or of features which D.T.S. has in common with other approaches, are given by

Gentzler, who points to the use by T.S. scholars of such aspects of Polysystem theory as “the destabilization of the notion of an original message with a fixed identity” (Gentzler 1993: 134), a topic treated, though from a different perspective, in Chapter One, and “the integration of both the original text and the translated text in the semiotic web of intersecting cultural systems” (Gentzler 1993: 134), a topic which will be discussed in the upcoming sections. It must be recognized, then, that the target-oriented concerns to which Polysystem theory opened the door were certainly desirable, and rejecting the main thrust of the theory need not stop one from retaining a number of its more useful elements.

2.5.3. Lefevere's Realism

The larger perspective which Toury's D.T.S. opens up is also adequately represented by André Lefevere, and though formulated and shaped differently, Lefevere's ideas can be aligned with Berman's guidelines in Chapter Three, and are thus relevant for this study. Lefevere begins his work *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* with the following statement:

It is my contention that the process resulting in the acceptance or rejection, canonization or non-canonization of literary works is dominated not by vague, but by very concrete factors that are relatively easy to discern as soon as one eschews interpretation as the core of literary studies and begins to address issues such as power, ideology, institution, and manipulation. (Lefevere 1992a: 2)

What Lefevere is addressing here is the fact that the reception and integration of a translation into a target culture is nothing like as abstract as would appear from certain representations of these processes. Lefevere's approach is factual: he shows that the critic simply needs a realistic knowledge of the national institutions, of economics, of cultural and social ideologies and of literary preferences in the target culture, and also of the position or status of the translator in all this, to understand why a certain translation gets accepted or not. Besides Lefevere, other translation scholars (Bassnett & Trivedi 1999, Barnstone 1993, Venuti 1992) have also given examples of how certain translations have changed

the cultures in which they were integrated. They have shown that there is a preparatory stage to this literary change and that there are a number of concrete factors, sometimes quite visible, sometimes less easy to uncover, which will facilitate or prohibit the adoption of a literary work by a certain (target) culture.

Lefevere, who sees forces of patronage at work both inside and outside of the target literary “system,” explains how the controlling force of patronage consists of three basic elements: ideology, economics and status.⁷ The economic component is the financial compensation the patron gives to the rewriter, and by status Lefevere refers to the social and cultural prestige attributed by the patron or patronizing institution, and which is linked to the translator’s own status. Ideology is interpreted by Lefevere in more or less the same way as Abdulla understands it, as “a set of ideas characteristic of a certain social group which help to legitimate its dominant political power within society” (Abdulla 1999: 1). Ideological considerations, looking at the socio-cultural, political and even economic foundations of the selection of texts which a culture rewrites, is an important issue in T.S. and will also inform the evaluation, in the present study, of Baudelaire’s position as a translator and the impact this had on his translation strategies.

In his explanation of the dynamics of patronage, Lefevere also links up the fluctuations of a literary system with the previously introduced necessity of translation. Lefevere indicates that the necessity of translation is engendered by a need in the target literature, a need for change in order to renew itself, a need which its “professionals” and patrons try to fill:

Change in a literary system is also closely connected with patronage; change is a function of the need felt in the environment of a literary system for that system to be or remain functional. (Lefevere 1992a: 23)

⁷ Lefevere explains that he uses the term “system” as a heuristic and pedagogical construct: “It is rather intended to be a neutral, descriptive term, used to designate a set of related elements that happen to share certain characteristics that set them apart from other elements perceived as not belonging to the system” (Lefevere 1992a: 12).

Besides patronage, Lefevere points to the importance of poetics, which consists on the one hand of “literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical situations, and symbols” (Lefevere 1992a: 26), which is the codified side of a poetics (embodied, in France for instance, by the *Académie Française*), and on the other hand of “a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole” (Lefevere 1992a: 26). Needless to add that Lefevere is aware that a culture’s poetics is intimately linked with its other “ideologies” or cultural, social and political components that lie outside the sphere of the literary system.

The occurrence of a codified poetics as it exists, for instance, in France, entails “the canonization of the output of certain rewriters whose work is regarded as conforming most closely to the codified poetics” (Lefevere 1992a: 28). But whereas the contextual specificity of *patronage* is obvious – patronage is mainly represented by human beings, whose mortality entails their passing and changing importance in the equation – poetics, on the other hand, especially its conception of the role of literature, is not such a visible nor tangible factor, and its context-specificity is less obvious. Still, as Lefevere points out, poetics is also context-bound:

A poetics, any poetics, is a historical variable: it is not absolute.
(Lefevere 1992a: 35)

For Lefevere, most poetics also seem to be ruled by a tendency to conservatism, though not so much in the sense of preserving old values as in the sense of self-preservation:

... to retain its “absolute” position as long as possible, a poetics must deny or, at least, rewrite the history of the literature it dominates at a given time.
(Lefevere 1992a: 35)

A poetics, and a poet-translator who is a part of it, will thus select those texts that help sustain its own existence, and, as will become clear in Chapters Four, Five and Six, this was case for the Baudelaire translations, in more ways than one. This act of self-preservation is achieved through rewriting. It is translation, or other

forms of rewriting, Lefevere explains, that often “helps” a poetics introduce the necessary change. The role of translation and rewriting in general is to be the importers of change, of new literary devices and genres, of renewed metaphors and forms, on which the literary system feeds to renew itself, and the attentive reader will have noticed that this image is consistent with de Campos’ cannibalistic metaphor, though on a broader level. Moreover, it can now safely be said that the absorption or “feeding off” goes both ways: literary systems absorb translations and are affected by them; and translations are selected on the basis of, and permeated by, the conventions and poetics of the literary system in which they are absorbed. Poetics and ideology are even thought to be stronger than linguistic considerations when it comes to choice in translation:

... on every level of the translation process, it can be shown that, if linguistic considerations enter into conflict with considerations of an ideological and/or poetological nature, the latter tend to win out. (Lefevere 1992a: 39).

The relevance of the poetics, ideology and patronage that reigned Baudelaire’s time will thus not be overlooked in this study, and the pre-analytical enquiries which will precede the textual analyses of the translations (see Chapter Four, Five and Six) will present as much information as possible to determine Baudelaire’s interaction with the target literature on that level.

The arrival of the meta-textual issues discussed above has reshaped the opinions of scholars on some of the eternally recurring questions in translation, which can now be considered from a new perspective. This chapter will end with a brief discussion on the ways in which contemporary T.S. scholars view the questions of equivalence, fluency and literalism, indicating the author’s position on these issues in the context of the present study.

2.6. Equivalence, Fluency and Literalism

2.6.1. Equivalence

In their introduction to *Translation, History and Culture* Bassnett and Lefevere state that:

... with the demise of the notion of equivalence as sameness, and recognition of the fact that literary conventions change continuously, the old evaluative norms of “good” and “bad,” “faithful” and “unfaithful” are also disappearing. (Bassnett & Lefevere 1990: 12)

Indeed, as the discussion of literalism and fluency will show, these old evaluative norms have been put into question, though an examination of the rhetoric that pervades the field shows that a similar attitude prevails under disguises that are sometimes too thin to cover a renewed tendency towards prescriptivism. This is because scholars have become interested in the ethical dimension of translation, and once having taken sides in the debate, inevitably end up wielding the new criteria in just as prohibitive a fashion as the old ones. Again, the importance of realising one’s own context-specificity in such ethical debates is often overlooked. Moreover, Lefevere and Bassnett’s sweeping announcement of the “demise of equivalence as sameness,” should be examined a bit more closely. First of all, equivalence is not always considered as mere “sameness,” and this becomes clear from House’s definition of translation and functional equivalence:

Equivalence I take to be the fundamental criterion of translation quality. Thus, an adequate translation text is a semantically and pragmatically equivalent one. As a first requirement for this equivalence, it is posited that a translation text has a function equivalent to that of its source text. However, ... this requirement needs to be further differentiated given the cline between overt and covert translation. (House 1997: 31-32)

This statement does not mention sameness, and House has already insisted that equivalence is not invariance (House 1997: 25). Instead House suggests that equivalence should be considered context-specifically, as moving, as translations do, on the cline between opposite translation types. What matters is that in

House's initial description, equivalence is not a fixed notion or quality for translations. Earlier in the same work House had stated that:

Given these different types of equivalence in translation [as established by Koller 1992] it becomes immediately clear that not all five types of equivalence can be aimed at in translation, but that – true to the nature of translation as a decision process (Levy 1967) it is necessary for the translator to make a choice, i.e., the translator has to set up a hierarchy of demands on equivalence that the [sic] wants to follow.
(House 1997: 26)

Equivalence thus depends on the translator's decision as to where on the cline between overt and covert translation he will position himself, and "how much" equivalence is required for that purpose. House thus seems to see equivalence as an unstable notion, i.e. equivalence is not a (fixed) middle term between two opposite choices for the translator, but describes each choice on a cline within a bi-polarity (which I take to be "equivalent" vs. "non-equivalent"). However, this is where things become more difficult. When House examines the implementation of her model, she states that:

The original assumption in the model that a TT in order to be adequate should have a function equivalent to the function of the ST had to be refined in the light of the crucial distinction between *overt* and *covert* translations: it is thus only in the cases of *covert* translation that it is in fact possible to achieve functional equivalence. This functional equivalence is, however, extremely difficult to achieve because differences in the socio-cultural norms of the two linguacultures have to be taken into account, and a *cultural filter* must be applied. (House 1997: 75)⁸

The above statement indicates that equivalence is only relevant for covert translations, and that even there, it does not necessarily occur very often. Moreover House's indication that equivalence is difficult to achieve when there are many *differences* in the norms of the linguacultures, seems to indicate that equivalence still essentially stands for (functional) sameness. House's equivalence

⁸ House explains the "cultural filter" as follows: "In a *covert* translation the translator has to make allowances for underlying cultural differences by placing what I call a *cultural filter* between the source text and the translation text. The translator has, as it were, to view the source text through the glasses of a target culture member" (House 1997: 70).

is thus not a term occurring in the middle of a cline, but a middle term that occurs at one end of the cline, and becomes synonymous for “adequate for covert translation.”

What House’s position shows is that the concept of equivalence needs to be adapted to take into account the context-specificity of translations, because equivalence, even taken as a middle term indicating a number of abstract qualities, may be differently constituted in different contexts. It can therefore be argued, with House’s support, that equivalence is not the unnecessary or demised concept that Bassnett and Lefevere want to think it is, that it should certainly not be considered as mere sameness, and that it would be ludicrous to deny that it is an essential notion in our understanding of the linguistic or textual aspects of translation. In this study, cases where what House defines as “functional equivalence” is lacking, *will* be examined, but never without losing sight of the context of the translator’s position and his aims for the translation. “The demise of equivalence as sameness” should thus be understood as the demise of the idea that equivalence (of whatever type) is the *only* measure by which one should evaluate and judge translations, and its near redundancy in a larger, meta-textual and non-eurocentric context. This is consistent with the post-structuralist view on translation which sees it not so much as an act of imitation, but as an act of supplementation, both between texts and between languages – a supplement is not an equivalent, but is at least partly characterized by a sameness with what it supplements. Moreover the “demise of equivalence” should not stop one from admitting that a good part of all translation strategies are based on an irreducible *desire* for some type of equivalence, and that equivalence (differentiated or not) is therefore essential to our understanding of the translation process and its resulting products.

2.6.2. Fluency

The issues of fluency and literalism are closely related, though fluency should not be directly opposed to literalism. A fluent translation is a translation which has

avoided word for word strategies, is oriented towards the reader in the target culture, and is adapted to the literary habits of this audience. House's use of the term "covert" to describe such translation illustrates why for Venuti, a fluent strategy is responsible for the "invisibility" of the translator: the more fluent (or covert) the translation, i.e. the more the language of the translation is adapted to the linguistic and literary customs of the target culture, the less it will "feel" like a translation and the less the reader will be aware of the presence of the translator, who thus becomes "invisible":

... a fluent strategy effaces the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text. This gets rewritten in the transparent discourse dominating the target-language culture and is inevitably coded with other target-language values, beliefs, and social representations ... a fluent strategy performs a labor of acculturation which domesticates the foreign text, making it intelligible and even familiar to the target-language reader, providing him or her with the narcissistic experience of recognizing his or her own culture in a cultural other, enacting an imperialism that extends the dominion of transparency with other ideological discourses over a different culture. (Venuti 1992: 5)

A fluent strategy, then, occurs in a variety of circumstances and from the second part of this quotation it becomes clear that for Venuti (and others, e.g. Cheyfitz 1991), a fluent strategy automatically constitutes an act of cultural imperialism. Indeed, with its variety of underlying motivations, fluency constitutes the first of the two possibilities in the classical dichotomy of what Bandia calls "sourcistes" and "ciblistes" (Bandia 1995: 492). Unfortunately, as Venuti's ideologically laden statement shows, though fluency and literalism are useful descriptive terms, certain scholars in the field have turned the tandem into a dichotomy of absolutes by taking sides in what has become an ethical debate, which means that terms like "domesticating" and "foreignising," or "target-oriented" and "source-oriented," "overt" and "covert," and even "close" and "free" translation are not used context-specifically, but within an abstract ethics of translation, and thus substitute one kind of prescriptivism by another, more political one. For Venuti, a fluent strategy also automatically becomes restrictive on a purely linguistic and textual level:

Fluency tries to check the drift of language away from the conceptual signified, away from communication and self-expression. When successfully deployed, it is the strategy that produces the effect of transparency, wherein the translation is identified with the foreign text and evokes the individualistic illusion of authorial presence. (Venuti 1992: 4)

Some authors who are on the same side of the tandem as Venuti, have therefore sworn by literalism, and the most adamant defenders of literalism are often those authors who have felt “betrayed” by their own translator(s), such as Vladimir Nabokov or Milan Kundera (on Kundera see Kuhiwozak 1990). Here are some of Nabokov’s snide comments on fluency:

The term “free translation” smacks of knavery and tyranny. It is when the translator sets out to render the “spirit” – not the textual sense – that he begins to traduce his author. The clumsiest literal translation is a thousand times more useful than the prettiest paraphrase.
(Nabokov 1992 [1955]: 127)

Considering, then, the risk of prescriptivism inherent in drawing the debate on an ethical level, terms such as “foreignising” and “domesticating,” or “overt” and “covert,” can only be used legitimately and efficiently when one refrains from using them as value judgments, and instead applies them with reference to a specific context. This can only be done by taking into account all the meta-textual aspects that determine and help form the translator’s decisions.

2.6.3. Literalism

Nabokov’s views are closely connected to what Walter Benjamin says about literalism. For Benjamin, literalism (or literalness) is linked to his concept of pure language: good literalism springs from the desire within language to “set free” pure language. He compares translation to fragments of a vessel which are glued together so that translation and original match in all their details, without resembling each other, and says that a translator should not try to catch the sense and render it in another language, but “give(s) voice to the *intentio* of the original not as reproduction but as harmony” (Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 79):

... a translation, instead of resembling the meaning of the original, must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification, thus making both the original and the translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language, just as fragments are part of a vessel. ... Therefore it is not the highest praise of a translation, *particularly in the age of its origin*, to say that it reads as if it had been written in that language. Rather, the significance of fidelity as ensured by literalness is that the work reflects the great longing for linguistic complementation.
(Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 79 – my italics)

The words in italics are a reminder of Benjamin's essentially temporal, linear view of translation – a point which will reappear in Chapter Three. As Benjamin's words have just confirmed, and as most recent writers on the topic seem to agree, literalism is nowadays considered less dangerous than fluency, and fluent translation is seen as a form of betrayal which undermines the transfer of cultural entities that do not get transferred but transformed and domesticated.[j2]
Literalism, however, should also be approached conspicuously. Even those scholars who take sides in the fluency debate, do recognise that literalism and fluency are not necessarily mutually exclusive and that not all literalism is good literalism:

Close translation certainly risks obscure diction, awkward construction, and hybrid forms but these vary in degree from one foreign text to another and from one domestic situation to another. Detections of "translationese" assume an investment in specific linguistic and cultural values to the exclusion of others. Hence *close translation is foreignising only because its approximation to the foreign text entails deviating from dominant domestic values* – like transparent discourse.
(Venuti 1995: 146 – my italics)

Literalism, then, does not necessarily always set language free, it does not necessarily bring out the foreignness of the text, but it can create an illusion of foreignness by simply sounding foreign – not a desirable quality either. It is indeed a very thin line between sounding strange because one's language is awkwardly adapted to fit a word for word rendering of the original (the "poor" version of literalism), or sounding strange because the unusual words or syntax reflect elements in the source text that are alien to the target literature. It is thus

not so much the fact of literalism itself, but the degree of literalism and the translator's motives for choosing it, and his techniques in applying literal strategies, that need to be investigated.

One point of general agreement in the fluency/literalism debate concerns the motives which underlie the choice of translation strategy, and scholars like Venuti and Lefevere declare that translators should be open (and honest) about their translation strategies, about their perception of the original, and about their aims in translation. Still, the underpinnings of a translator's choices are precisely that part of the translation process that is most difficult to pin down, and this is not in the least because translators are themselves not always truthful about (or even aware of) their real motives. Again, this is where para-text can play an important role when it becomes a part of the translation critic's object of investigation. Nabokov, who sees a link between literalism and the "truth" of a translation, would like to see:

... translations with copious footnotes, footnotes reaching up like skyscrapers to the top of this or that page so as to leave only the gleam of one textual line between commentary and eternity. I want such footnotes and the absolute literal sense, with no emasculation and no padding. (Nabokov 1992 [1955]: 143)

Still, para-text (including footnotes) should also be approached with caution, and this particularly applies to historical translations and their para-texts. In Sherry Simon's words, when one considers a translator's notes, for instance, one needs to ask oneself the question: "is the word of the translator to be taken seriously?" (Simon 1990: 115). In the course of this study a lot of information provided by the translator in para-texts will be examined, and it will be necessary to determine whether this information is consistent with his position, and more importantly, with what he actually does in the text of his translation. The examination of para-text is thus an exercise in scepticism, which remains indispensable if one wants to determine if the translator's strategies are consistent with the claims he makes about them and about his work in general, and also with the appraisal of the translation by others. This means that the present author does not put the same

kind of faith in footnotes as Nabokov did, at least not as truthful purveyors of the translator's intentions and motivations, and shares Sherry Simon's scepticism.

Berman, who wrote extensively on the German tradition in translation (as described in his 1984 *L'Épreuve de l'étranger: culture et traduction dans l'Allemagne romantique*), and who was then an equally enthusiastic defender of successful literalism, thinks that the translator should be free to introduce as many footnotes as he likes, since they are a guarantee for honest work:

Il n'y a cependant non-véridicité *que* dans la mesure où les manipulations sont tues, *passées sous silence*. Ne pas dire ce qu'on va faire – par exemple adapter plutôt que traduire – ou faire autre chose que ce qu'on a dit, voilà ce qui a valu à la corporation de l'adage italien *traduttore traditore*, et que le critique doit dénoncer durement. Le traducteur a *tous les droits* dès lors qu'il joue franc jeu. (Berman 1995: 93)

Berman's optimism can be mitigated somewhat, however, by stating that an inadequate translation is not justified simply by adding a footnote that somehow legitimates its inadequacy. Moreover, it would be naïve to believe that, simply because a translator has bothered to add a footnote to his translation, he is automatically telling the truth about his work. Footnotes, then, are to be taken not so much as the source of the truth about the translator's intentions, but as a signpost. They usually indicate that the translator has made a difficult or problematic choice, a choice with which he may have felt uncomfortable or at least which he felt needed justification, and thus signal a choice whose underlying motivations the critic should examine, sceptically testing the translator's statements and comparing them to what happens in the translated text.

Incidentally, the same scepticism also applies to other types of para-text, which can indicate to a certain extent the stance of the translator, the way he approaches the work of the author and the way he approaches his task as a translator of that work, but which, again, should always be examined against the backdrop of the reality of his translations.

2.7. The Ineluctability of Prescriptivism

As indicated in the preceding sections, in the hands of a number of scholars the literalism and fluency debate has had the unfortunate effect of substituting old prescriptive criteria (tagging translations as good or bad) by new ones within an ethical stand on translation. The reasons why prescriptivism is so ubiquitously present in translation theory and how the very nature of translation (and rewriting) makes it difficult to avoid that tendency, will now be examined.

Kaisa Koskinen ends her article “(Mis)translating the Untranslatable – The Impact of Deconstruction and Post-Structuralism on Translation Theory,” with a confirmation of Berman’s position on the importance for the translator to reveal his translation strategy and the motivations of his choices. In this statement, Koskinen also indicates that a good translation is a translation which overtly represents the linguistic and cultural differences between the source and target texts – i.e. a good translation is an overtly foreignizing translation:

The danger then lies in the invisibility of the translator, not in the act of translation itself. In my opinion the translator needs to come out from under cover, and openly show her/his manipulation. Instead of aiming at domesticated transparency and hidden foreignness, the translator *should* rather let the reader be aware of the linguistic and cultural differences and the plurality of meanings (see Venuti 1992).
(Koskinen 1994: 451 – my italics)

Here, the italicised modal reveals Koskinen’s own tendency towards prescriptivism, which is incongruent with a post-structuralist translation theory that pits itself against logocentrism and euro-centrism. Still, as much as one can put the origin under erasure and claim the instability of the original text, the fact is that one remains pervaded, as Derrida pointed out, by a *desire* for a stable origin or centre. In the same way, as much as translation scholars wish to do away with the notion of equivalence, a translator’s choices will inevitably remain pervaded by that same desire for equivalence. Since no theorist denies that consistency is an essential requirement in translation, this entails that no theorist, including those who wish to resist prescriptivism with all their might, can escape a preference for

a certain side of the opposition between a consistent move towards the source (text, language, culture and reader) or a move towards the target (text, language, culture and reader). Berman, whose preference for literalism was especially obvious in his “La traduction à la lettre, ou l’auberge du lointain” (Berman 1985: 69-82), where he enumerates the translation practices that incarnate domestication, has, in his *Pour une critique des traductions*, tried hard to abandon this prescriptive attitude, stating that:

D’une façon générale, il faut refuser avec la dernière énergie,^[j3] depuis qu’on a commencé à enseigner la traduction littéraire, toute *inféodation* du traduire à un quelconque discours conceptuel qui, directement ou non, lui dirait, “ce qu’il faut faire;” cela vaut pour l’analyse textuelle, pour la poétique, la linguistique, mais aussi, (sinon surtout) pour les “traductologies” en tout genre. (Berman 1995: 69)^[j4]

Still, this statement being expressed in deontic modality (“il faut”), it gives the clearest counter-indication possible to Berman’s attempt to reject prescriptivism. The statement evidences once again that prescriptivism is difficult to avoid completely in translation theory and in Translation Criticism, which does not mean that one should accept it uncritically as an inevitable feature of translation theory. The neutralisation of this prescriptive tendency can be enhanced through an acknowledgment that one is “doing criticism,” that this is a kind of rewriting, and not a mere description, which in turn will raise one’s awareness of the context-specificity of each evaluation, and of the futility of trying to establish fixed criteria and values to measure translations by. Moreover, it is natural for translation assessment criteria to oscillate between a preference for a movement towards the source or a movement towards the target, because Translation Criticism is a rewriting of these choices, previously made by the translator. This is why Translation Criticism cannot, and does not need to, deny itself a usage of criteria which belong to one of the two sides of the scale, as long as it remains aware of its own context-specificity, and that of the translation.

2.8. Recapitulation and Conclusions

Translation Studies has seen, over the last few decades, a rising interest in the cultural aspects of translation, and in methods that give a more culturally oriented description of translation. At the same time Translation Criticism has been marginalized and remains largely undefined, and Toury has unjustly attributed an inevitably prescriptive character to it. It has been shown that in a view of translation as rewriting, Translation Criticism is context-specific, and thus largely escapes the tendency to prescriptivism. Moreover, T.C. includes description, quality assessment and evaluation, but also moves beyond these activities into meta-textual explanations of the motivations underlying the translator's strategies and decisions.

The linguistic approaches in Translation Studies provide a confirmation that Translation Criticism is necessary, since, rather logically, these approaches have limited their descriptions to the textual and linguistic data, and have as yet not included a systematic description of the meta- and para-textual context of translation. Translation Criticism, especially a T.C. that uses para-text, can enrich a linguistic approach such as House's by adding a reversed direction to the process of evaluation and assessment: whereas the linguistic approaches go from analysis to value judgement, Translation Criticism can also go from value judgement (whether objective or subjective, and whether coming from the translator or from other commentators) to analysis, and see how far the two bear each other out. Translation Criticism thus benefits from the textual-linguistic approaches, which it can follow to a large extent, and which it also elaborates by adding meta-textual information, often yielded by para-texts.

The present chapter has also shown the continuing relevance of criteria such as "overt" and "covert," and of labels like "literary" and "fluent," or "foreignising" and "domesticating," while at the same time underlining the importance of wielding these criteria in a non-ethical and contextualised manner. Equivalence can also be retained as a useful notion, again with the understanding that it cannot

be used as a fixed term to judge translations by, but that it can only be examined against the backdrop of the totality of the translator's decisions, and the context in which these decisions occur. In a Translation Criticism which sees itself as rewriting, and thus automatically acknowledges its own context-specificity, ethics can therefore be replaced by a sense of the historicity of one's own discourse, by an awareness of the dangers of any type of logocentrism, and by an acknowledgement of the context-specificity of translation and rewriting in general.

Chapter Three: Antoine Berman's Proposals for Translation Criticism

3.1. Introduction

Antoine Berman, whose guidelines for Translation Criticism will be discussed in this chapter, grounds his method on the same foundations as those introduced in the first chapter:

... mon analyse des traductions, étant et se voulant une *critique*, se fonde également sur Walter Benjamin, car c'est chez lui qu'on trouve le concept le plus élevé et le plus radical de la critique "littéraire" – et de la critique tout court. (Berman 1995: 15)

Berman tries to resist dichotomies in his theory-building and, in a move similar to Benjamin's idea of "Fortleben" and "Überleben," describes translation in a temporal perspective, with different states or stages of translation. The foundations of Berman's thought can thus be aligned both with Benjamin's ideas on translation and with post-structuralist thinking – Berman himself describes his perspective in the following announcement of his proposals:

Herméneutique post-heideggérienne et critique benjaminienne me servent donc ici à expliciter et ordonner (non systématiser) mon expérience de l'analyse de traductions. (Berman 1995: 15)

Berman indicates with "non systématiser" that he does not adhere to the "systems" approach discussed in the previous chapter, which does not, however, prevent him from describing his observations in a systematic manner. He presents a coherent and methodical framework for Translation Criticism based on detailed textual and linguistic analyses of the translations, but which at the same time includes in its considerations the meta-textual concerns discussed in the previous chapter. Benjamin's main focus is on:

... l'auteur du texte traduit, le fameux "sujet traduisant" dont tous les théoriciens de la traduction parlent, sans parvenir à mettre la main dessus. (Berman 1995: 16)

An interest in the author of the translated text may seem contradictory in a method grounding itself in the school which has proclaimed the death of the author, but as has already indicated, the translator, whom Berman calls a "sujet traduisant," is not so much an author, but a reader and rewriter. This proviso allows one to follow Berman's focus on the translator, and one will thus, like Berman, go "in search of the translator" ("à la recherche du traducteur" (Berman 1995: 16)), in order to fill in four main "hermeneutic categories" ("catégories herméneutiques" (ibid.)). The question that will then be asked first is: "Who is the translator?" ("qui est le traducteur?" (ibid.)), after which the categories of "the translator's stance" ("sa position traductive" (ibid.)), "the translator's project" ("son projet de traduction" (ibid.)), and "the translator's horizon" ("son horizon traductif" (ibid.)) will be filled in. The purpose and meaning of these four categories – or questions – will be examined in the second part of this chapter.

3.2. Berman's "Grandes Traductions"

Before discussing Berman's proposals for Translation Criticism, however, I'd like to touch on an aspect of Berman's views on translation will be examined because of its specific relevance for this study. Berman has written on several occasions on the concept of what he calls "grandes traductions," a term which is best rendered by "great translations," although "historic translations" is, for reasons that will become clear, an equally defensible option. In a 1990 article entitled "La retraduction comme espace de la traduction" Berman explains what he understands by a "grande traduction," founding the concept on a temporal view of translation. It is also in this article that Berman classifies Baudelaire's translations of Poe's work among such other great translations as:

... la Vulgate de Saint-Jérôme, la Bible de Luther, l'*Authorized Version* ... le Plutarque d'Amyot, les *Mille et une nuits* de Galland, le Shakespeare de

Schlegel, l'*Antigone* de Hölderlin, le *Paradis perdu* de Milton de Chateaubriand, le Poe de Baudelaire, le Baudelaire de Stefan George: voilà une liste, nullement exhaustive, de grandes traductions. (Berman 1990: 2)

The reader should know, however, that among the non-religious texts cited here, Berman carried out extensive studies on most of these translations, with the exception of Baudelaire's work. Berman's bibliography does not contain a detailed study on the Baudelaire translations, and in his work the translations are only mentioned as a classic example in translation, very much in the same sweeping manner as in the extract above. In preceding texts (Berman 1985: 132), Berman even spelled Poe's name in its Gallicised version, as "le Poë de Baudelaire," an error which he is not alone in committing to this day.⁹ It would thus appear that Berman's experience of the Baudelaire translations was more that of an interested and enthusiastic reader than that of a translation critic. Without deciding at this point whether Berman's concept of "grande traduction" applies to Baudelaire's translations, Berman's discussion on great translations will here be taken up, because it contains insights that can lead to a better understanding of the questions which these "historic" translations raise.

3.2.1. The Necessity of Retranslation

When Berman talks about retranslation, he refers to Goethe in order to support his temporally structured view of translation, and to Benjamin, in order to explain the essential qualities of great translations. Berman shows how Goethe, in his *West-Österlicher Divan*, describes three modes of translation, which are actually three stages in, or states of, translation, which normally follow each other in chronological order. The first is a "traduction mot-à-mot (non-littéraire)," (Berman 1985: 116), a word for word translation:

⁹ The misspelling of Poe's name was a major worry for Baudelaire, who in a letter to Sainte-Beuve, whom he had asked to write a review of the first volume of translations, instructed his friend as follows: "Je suis persuadé qu'un homme ainsi soigneux que vous ne m'en voudra pas, si je prie de bien observer l'orthographe du nom d'Edgar Poe. Pas de *d*, pas de tréma, pas d'accent" (Correspondances I 1973 [1856]: 345).

... la traduction intra ou juxtalinéaire (mot à mot) visant tout au plus à donner une idée grossière (dixit Goethe) de l'original. (Berman 1990: 2)

Secondly, there is the "traduction adaptatrice ou parodique," (Berman 1985: 117) which Berman also describes as:

... la traduction libre, qui adapte l'original à la langue, à la littérature, à la culture du traducteur. (Berman 1990: 2)

and of which Fitzgerald's *Rubayyat* or the *Belles Infidèles* would be appropriate examples. Then comes the last stage, called the "traduction interlinéaire élaborée," which Goethe called literal translation:

... la traduction littérale, au sens de Goethe, c'est-à-dire celle qui reproduit les "particularités" culturelles, textuelles, etc. de l'original. (Berman 1990: 2)

Every state of translation corresponds to a step towards this final stage in translation, the place where translation is "achieved" or "accomplished." Berman calls this the "espace d'accomplissement de la traduction," and this stage is only reached by what he calls "grandes traductions." "Accomplissement" should then really be understood as a *successful* achievement (especially after a lot of (repeated) effort), because what Berman is actually describing here is more like a "consummate" stage – *Webster's* defines "consummate" as "brought to completion in a state of the highest perfection" (*Webster's* 1984: 182). One could thus say that for Berman great translations are marked by their having reached the consummate stage, the stage of successful achievement.

In spite of being framed in a chronological perspective, the three stages in translation are not fixed categories: Berman recognises that a great translation can occur in the first stage (though this is not very frequent) and that not all translations occurring at the third stage will qualify as a great translations. What is consistent with the previous discussions on the life-sustaining force of translation and rewriting, is that Berman sees retranslation as a necessary activity for translation. The idea of the necessity of retranslation thus shows that Berman's

views are also rooted in a recognition of the necessity *of* and *in* translation – the necessity *of* translation as a necessity of language, and the necessity *in* translation as a desire in every translation for retranslation. Indeed, Berman sees a need in the first translation which causes the subsequent retranslations to occur:

C'est dans l'après-coup d'une première traduction aveugle et hésitante que surgit la possibilité d'une traduction accomplie. (Berman 1990: 2)

This, says Berman, is because the first translation is marked by what he calls “défaillance,” a concept which I propose to translate as “want,” and which is intimately linked with untranslatability:¹⁰

Toute traduction est défaillante, c'est-à-dire entropique. Quelles que soient ses principes. Ce qui veut dire que toute traduction est marquée par la “non-traduction.” (Berman 1990: 5)

For Berman “défaillance” is the prerequisite for retranslation, and when a translation has run through its necessary cycles of retranslation, says Berman, it finally reaches the consummate stage, the stage of great translations. Here, “défaillance” is counterbalanced by abundance or *copia*. However, it should be underlined that for Berman even a great (re)translation can still be replaced by another (even greater?) (re)translation:

Parfois, dans cette multiplicité [of retranslations] se dégage une grande traduction qui, pour un temps, suspend la succession des retraductions ou diminue leur nécessité. Dans la grande traduction, la défaillance reste présente, mais contrebalancée par un phénomène, que nous pouvons rappeler, avec les traducteurs du XVI^e siècle, la *copia*, l'abondance. (Berman 1990: 5)

If they were merely measured by the standard of “suspending” the process of retranslation, Baudelaire's translations of Poe could certainly be ranked in Berman's category of “great translations,” since their existence has indeed *de*

¹⁰ “Défaillance” is used in French academic surroundings to signify a student's absence (e.g. at an exam), and generally means *weakness, fault, failure, default* (Collins Robert 1998: 242). I have chosen *want*, because *weakness, fault* and *failure* seem more applicable to physical things, and between *lack* and *want*, *want* is the term which expresses unambiguously that what is missing is necessary or desirable.

facto suspended the activity of retranslating what Baudelaire had already translated. However, Berman does not specify how long “pour un temps” can be, and when one keeps in mind the established necessity for retranslation, the extremely long duration of the non-retranslation of Baudelaire’s Poe raises the question whether this kind of suspension is such a happy state for a translation to be in.

3.2.2. The *Kairos* of Great Translations and the “Chosen Translator”

The other concept which applies to Berman’s great translations is *kairos*, a term which Berman also uses in “La traduction et la lettre, ou l’auberge du lointain” (Berman 1984: 116 note 99). As Berman explains, *kairos* is the “moment favorable,” the opportune moment, the right or ripe time for a great translation to occur:

La grande retraduction ne surgit qu’ “au moment favorable.” Le moment favorable est celui où se trouve brusquement et imprévisiblement (mais non sans raisons) “suspendue” la résistance qui engendre la défaillance, l’incapacité de “bien” traduire une œuvre. (Berman 1990: 6)

The reason why it was previously stated that Berman’s “grandes traductions” could also be translated as “historic translations,” is because of the precise historical moment in which these great translations supposedly take place, and which Berman, following Benjamin, calls *kairos*, defined by Liddell & Scott as follows:

ο καιρός : 1. due measure, proportion, fitness ... 2. vital part of the body ... 3. exact or critical time, season, opportunity – adverbial phrases, εν καιρῷ ... 4. advantage, profit. (Liddell & Scott 1968: 859-860)

For Berman, the *kairos* for a great translation is not simply determined by the socio-cultural conditions which favour its realisation. Here is his (remarkably prescriptive) enumeration of the conditions for and characteristics of a great translation[j5]:

- Elle se caractérise par une extrême systématique, au moins égale à celle de l'original.
 - Elle est le lieu d'une rencontre entre la langue de l'original et celle du traducteur.
 - Elle crée un lien intense avec l'original, qui se mesure à l'impact que celui-ci a sur la culture réceptrice.
 - Elle constitue pour l'activité de traduction contemporaine ou ultérieure un précédent incontournable.
 - Ces traductions ont encore un trait commun: ce sont toutes des retraductions.
- (Berman 1990: 2-3)

Considering the fact that the Baudelaire translations are ranged by Berman himself among the great translations, it will be interesting to see whether the above conditions and characteristics apply to Baudelaire's translations (at least those analysed in Chapter Seven and Eight). In the meantime, a few more things can be said about Berman's concept of *kairos* that are relevant for this study.

For Berman *kairos* is a temporal category, but he also attributes a personal element to *kairos*, which dictates that great translations also need great translators in order to occur:

Catégorie temporelle, le *kairos* renvoie à l'Histoire elle-même. A un moment donné, il devient "enfin" possible de traduire une œuvre. Après maintes introductions érudites, scolaires, maintes adaptations, il devient possible d'inscrire la signifiante d'une œuvre dans notre espace langagier. Cela arrive avec un grand traducteur. (Berman 1990: 6)

However, Berman's description of what makes a "grand traducteur" is vague and appeals to the psychological processes which the translator is supposed to undergo:

... [un grand traducteur] se définit par le règne en lui de la pulsion traduisante, laquelle n'est pas le simple désir de traduire. Tout traducteur désire traduire (en principe!). Mais ce désir, en lui, se conjugue à son envers, le désir de ne pas traduire, ou plus précisément, le recul devant l'acte de traduire. On peut très bien repérer, dans une traduction, les reculs d'un traducteur. Mais chez celui qu'habite la pulsion traduisante, ce recul est réduit à son minimum. (Berman 1990: 6)

In fact, like Benjamin's "chosen translator" (Benjamin 1992 [1923]: 73), Berman's use of a concept such as "grand traducteur" suggests an essentially "centrist" view of translations and translators, in the sense that it seems to assume the existence of an "ideal" translator. Moreover, in Berman's description the desire to translate is clearly not something which can be measured, since it happens in the head (or the heart) of the translator. The link between Berman's "great translations" and his "great translator" can actually be established more directly by expanding the temporal concept to include a personification of that "opportune moment" through a semantic possibility which Berman overlooked. Indeed, Bailly's *Dictionnaire grec-français* gives the same meanings for the noun *kairos* and for the adjective *kairios* (καίριος) as Liddell & Scott, but also mentions the proper name *Kairos* (Καῖρός), translated as "l'Occasion personifiée," and refers the reader to Pausanias' *Descriptions of Greece* for an example (Bailly 1950: 1001). In this work, *Kairos* (Καῖρός) is described as the god Opportunity, and is thought to be no less than the youngest son of Zeus. Here is the English translation of the extract from Pausanias:

Quite close to the entrance to the stadium are two altars; one they call the altar of Hermes of the Games, the other the altar of Opportunity. I know that a hymn to Opportunity is one of the poems of Ion of Chios; in the hymn Opportunity is made out to be the youngest child of Zeus. (Pausanias 1955: 463)

Kairos is thus the personification of the opportune moment, and a great translator is "the right person at the right time." If Berman ranked Baudelaire's translations as "great translations," he therefore also considered Baudelaire as the *Kairos* to do these translations. The claim that Baudelaire was the right person at the right time to do these translations will therefore also be investigated. Furthermore, this interest in the translator also shows why Berman deems it necessary to determine what the translator's "position" is, and which aspects of that position may have influenced his work as a translator. These topics are part of Berman's guiding principles in T.C., which will now be introduced.

3.3. Berman's Guidelines for Translation Criticism

3.3.1. Pre-Reading the Translation

In his “*esquisse d’une méthode*” (Berman 1995: 64), drawn up in *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne*, Berman proposes to begin the critique of a translation with a pre-analysis, or pre-analytical enquiry, of which the first stage is an independent reading and re-reading of the translation, leaving aside entirely the original, and approaching the translation as an independent text. The reversed order of reading is justified and even necessitated by the idea that a translation is no longer seen as a derived text but as a fully independent piece of (re)writing. Berman is very insistent on the importance of this first stage as consisting of an entirely independent reading:

Laisser l’original, résister à la compulsion de comparaison, c’est là un point sur lequel on ne saurait trop insister. Car seule cette lecture de la traduction permet de pressentir si le texte traduit “tient.”
(Berman 1995: 65)

By his use of the verb “tenir,” Berman is referring to the degree in which the text is coherent and consistent and the degree in which the text manages to “live”:

Ce que découvre ou non cette lecture, c’est son degré de *consistance immanente* en dehors de toute relation à l’original. Et son degré de *vie immanente*. (Berman 1995: 65)

During the pre-reading stage, Berman thus the reader/critic to look for consistency in the translation (e.g. a consistent type of literalism) and suggests that he ask himself, firstly, whether the translation is a text that can live or stand on its own as a coherent whole.¹¹

¹¹ House mentions a German linguistic-textual approach, developed by Gerzymisch-Arbogast, who also proposes an independent reading of the translation preceding any comparison with or even reading of the original. The evaluator is also supposed to focus on salient textual zones: “... the evaluator proceeds from the translation recording her impression of the translation with regard to certain “aspects” that have crystallized, out of a list of phenomena that commanded her attention, i.e., were deemed remarkable or odd” (House 1997: 23).

Secondly, during the first reading of the translation the critic is also on the lookout for “textual zones” (by which Berman simply means parts of the text) that stand out, either because they are problematic or because they are “miraculous.”

Berman instructs the critic to find:

... des “zones textuelles” problématiques, qui sont celles où affleure la défektivité ... des “zones textuelles” que je qualifierai de miraculeuses ... où le traducteur a écrit-étranger [7] en français et, ainsi, produit un français neuf, (sont) les zones de grâce et de richesse du texte traduit.
(Berman 1995: 66)

By “écrit-étranger en français” Berman is referring to a translation strategy which he expounds in “La traduction et la lettre, ou l’auberge du lointain” (Berman 1985). In this work Berman defends a type of translation which he describes, within the framework of an ethics of translation, as “une éducation à l’étrangeté” (Berman 1985: 86). Incidentally, it is probably because of that ethical drive, that *Pour une critique des traductions* (Berman 1995) still shows the prescriptive tendencies discussed at the end of Chapter Two. For the Berman of 1985:

La visée éthique, poétique et philosophique de la traduction consiste à manifester dans *sa* langue cette pure nouveauté en préservant son visage de nouveauté. (Berman 1985: 89)

With “écrire-étranger” Berman is pointing, then, to the overt type of translation which respects the foreignness of the work, and “écrire-étranger” is equated with a type of literalism which Berman calls “fidélité à la lettre,” and which he opposes to a “fidélité à l’esprit.” The former purports that the translator must try to stay as close as possible to the source text, in order to reproduce in his own language a text which remains marked by novelty and foreignness. The fact that “écrire-étranger” means that a translator should not try to reproduce the “spirit” of a work is also reminiscent of Nabokov’s statement that “It is when the translator sets out to render the “spirit” – not the textual sense – that he begins to traduce his author” (Nabokov 1992 [1955]: 127).

As a third question Berman thus asks the critic to be on the lookout for textual zones where the translator “writes foreign,” and these usually also correspond to those places in the text which typify the style of the translation: they are zones where the translation materializes or comes into its own being as an independent text. In this sense, incidentally, Berman’s description of “textual zones” implies a definition of style in translation that corresponds with the one the present author defended in a paper presented at the PALA Annual Conference in Birmingham (April 2001), where it was stated that a translator’s style is not a question of recurring patterns of language use that are typical of the translator’s linguistic habits, but that the translator’s style is found in those places where he has made crucial choices that indicate, in House’s vocabulary, his preference on the scale between overt and covert translation.

The pre-reading of the translation which Berman requires the critic to do, and the three questions he asks him to keep in mind, thus serve to single out those parts of the text that are stylistically and linguistically marked – and these will often coincide with decisions which, at a later stage, will help placing the translation on House’s cline. While the translation critic experiences a pre-reading of the translation as if it were an entirely independent text, he is thus also delineating those areas where the translation shows the ideological and/or poetical stamp of the translator. These characteristics will then, at the end of our analysis, be brought into relation with what is known about the translator.

3.3.2. Pre-Reading the Original

After this preliminary reading of the translation, Berman asks the critic to turn his attention to the original, inviting him to find those passages and stylistic features which typify the original, “qui *individuent* la lecture et la langue de l’original et en font un réseau de corrélations systématiques” (Berman 1995: 67). The main aim is here to determine the rapports that exist in the original between source culture

writing and language usage, and to examine the original's intertextual and intratextual relationships:

Il faut qu'il [the critic] recoure à de multiples lectures collatérales, d'autres œuvres de l'auteur, d'ouvrages divers sur cet auteur, son époque, etc.
(Berman 1995: 68)

This, Berman thinks, is what the translator, as reader of the original, should do, or at least what he should have done, and Berman insists on the importance for the critic to follow the translator's footprints. This strategy of "collateral" pre-reading also aligns Berman's proposals with a para-textual approach to translation assessment, the foundations of which were introduced in the first chapter of this study.

For reasons of clarity and textual logic, and though a simulation of the pre-readings of the translations and the original stories which were selected will introduce each comparative analysis, the conclusions resulting from these pre-readings, will in fact feature *after* the actual comparative analyses of the translations. Still, certain observations and impressions emanating from these simulated pre-readings will guide the textual analyses in the shape of guiding questions. This will also allow the linking up of the impressions resulting from these pre-readings with the information that has been given in the pre-analytical enquiries concerning the translator's position, stance, project and horizon, and which will conclude each critique.

3.3.3. Pre-Analytical Enquiries: What is the Translator's Position?

As he announces from the beginning, Berman wants to bring the translator to the fore, and he insists that the translation critic should know as much as possible about the translator and his work. Berman believes that this is a question which Translation Studies, and more specifically the Tel-Aviv School, has not yet sufficiently addressed:

L'emprise du fonctionnalisme, même enrichi, empêche à mon avis toute réflexion sur le *sujet traduisant*. (Berman 1995: 59)¹²

With reference to Toury's work, Berman argues quite logically that it is impossible to talk about translational behaviour and about the possible "norms" regulating this behaviour, whilst at the same time disregarding the fact that translators are individuals who make individual choices:

... une traduction est toujours *individuelle* ... parce qu'elle procède d'une individualité, même soumise à des "normes." Lorsqu'un traducteur se conforme entièrement à celles-ci, cela prouve seulement qu'il a *décidé* de les faire les siennes. (Berman 1995: 60)

This point was also made in the previous chapter. Moreover, from the acknowledgment of the fact that translation strategies are a question of individual choice, it follows that anyone who wants to interpret and investigate a translation is under the obligation of finding out who the "translating subject" is:

... l'une des tâches d'une herméneutique du traduire est la prise en vue du sujet traduisant. Ainsi la question *qui est le traducteur?* doit-elle être fermement posée face à une traduction. (Berman 1995: 73)

A description of the individual translating subject is indeed an aspect which the Tel-Aviv school, though arrogating to itself the phrase *Descriptive Translation Studies*, has completely left aside. Fortunately, Berman is not the only translation scholar to show an interest in the translator, and a number of the sources which were consulted and quoted in the preceding two chapters follow the same line. The opening lines of Lefevere's *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (Lefevere 1992a) are an immediate confirmation of this fact:

This book deals with those in the middle, the men and women who do not write literature, but rewrite it. (Lefevere 1992a: 1)

¹² With "fonctionnalisme enrichi" Berman is mainly referring to the Tel-Aviv school and Gideon Toury's work.

The lack of interest for the individual translator is also the critique voiced by Lefevere regarding the impersonal nature of Toury's Polysystem approach. "Literature," says Lefevere, "is not a deterministic system, not "something" that will "take over" and "run things," destroying the freedom of the individual reader, writer and rewriter" (Lefevere 1992a: 12). Lefevere also points to the fact that a translator "can choose to adapt to the system ... or they may choose to oppose the system" (Lefevere 1992a: 13), and that the factor of individual choice cannot be overlooked. More confirmation of this interest in the individual as "translating subject" is found in the work of scholars like Venuti – whose whole project in Translation Studies is to make the translator more visible. It therefore seems rather ineluctable, especially in a case of a translation carried out by a celebrated poet-translator, who was to become an important member of the literary system into which he translated, to bring to the fore the individual who carried out the translation. Doing otherwise would simply mean missing out on important data that can provide a number of meta-textual and macro-level clues.

It thus seems necessary and entirely justified to begin an analysis of the Baudelaire translations by a "search" for the "translating subject," and for his position within the target language, culture and literature. The translation critic should try to establish a number of facts relating to this individual which will be of assistance at the stage of the textual analyses of the translations:

Il nous importe de savoir s'il est français ou étranger, s'il n'est "que" traducteur ou s'il exerce une autre profession significative, ... s'il est aussi auteur et a produit des œuvres, de quelle(s) langue(s) il traduit, quel(s) rapport(s) il entretient avec elle(s); s'il est bilingue, et de quelle sorte; quel genre d'œuvres il traduit usuellement, et quelles autres œuvres il a traduites; s'il est polytraducteur ... ou monotraducteur; nous voulons savoir quels sont, donc, ses domaines langagiers et littéraires; ... s'il a écrit des articles, études, thèses, ouvrages sur les œuvres qu'il a traduites; et enfin, s'il a écrit sur sa pratique de traducteur, sur les principes qui le guident, sur ses traductions et la traduction en général. (Berman 1995: 74)

The answers to all these questions, as applied to Baudelaire, will be given in Chapters Four, Five and Six. In the meantime, as has already been pointed out, it should be kept in mind that Baudelaire's case is specific, since he was not simply

a translator, but a translator and poet at the same time. If the translator was also a poet and active member of the literary system, the question whether he has produced literary works of his own becomes a lot more relevant than in the opposite case. If one wishes to describe the rapports which a translator-poet entertained with the literature he translated, one should also try to determine the literary domain in the target culture with which he himself would have associated (or differentiated) the source literature, and this association will undoubtedly be linked to his own position and status in the literary system. It will be pertinent, then, to familiarise oneself with the kind of literature (poetry and prose) Baudelaire wrote himself, and the kind of literature he wrote *about*, in order to determine where his literary tastes and preferences lay. Considering that Baudelaire also wrote as literary reviewer and art critic, and that, moreover, a lot of his correspondence contains information about his personal views on literature, such investigations are certainly feasible, and most of them can even be carried out within para-textual perimeters.

Baudelaire's status of poet-translator thus requires the critic to direct his inquiries even beyond Berman's question which will re-occur at the end of this chapter, where Berman will ask us to describe the "horizon" against which Baudelaire translated. In anticipation on that point, it should be noted that Berman's view of "horizon," both when he describes it in theory and when he applies it himself, mainly designates a "translational horizon," i.e. a description of the kind of translations that were being produced at the time when the translator was doing translation, and of the kind of "norms" that may have influenced his strategies, as expressed in treatises on translation, prefaces or other texts discussing translation. This is the part of the "horizon" which will be dealt with at the end of this chapter. However, as was pointed out in the previous paragraph, with Baudelaire's position as an active member of the target literature, information has been included which reveals the consequences that this position may have had on his activities as a translator, because the two activities of writing (poetry and prose) and translating, occurring more or less simultaneously, are likely to have been interconnected in more than one way. The search for Baudelaire's personal

“literary horizon” is therefore distinguished from the “literary horizon” in which he was working and into which he was translating, and, moreover, from his “translational horizon.” The first, more personal aspect will be discussed as a part of Baudelaire’s position as a translator (Chapter Four), the “literary horizon” in which Baudelaire was working will be discussed in Chapter Five, and the “translational horizon” will be dealt with in Chapter Six.

What may be added at this point is that, if Berman asks the critic to establish the links between source culture production and target culture reception and possible absorption of a translation, some information should also be obtained about the position of the source author in the source literature. It would thus be useful to add to the literary horizon of the target text at least a glimpse of the relevant aspects of the literary horizon of the original text and author. [j8]

In Baudelaire’s case, then, the part of the “*théorie du sujet traduisant*” (Berman 1995: 75) that determines the translator’s position and answers the question “Who is the translator?” will not only describe the translator’s linguistic skills, “*sa position langagière*” (Berman 1995: 75), (which can be translated as his “being-in-language”), but also his literary tastes and preferences (his “*position scriptuaire*” (ibid.)), while the “literary horizon” of the target text will be taken up separately. Meanwhile, the pre-analytical investigations can go on to the next question, in which the critic needs to determine, in Berman’s terms, the “*position traductive*” (Berman 1995: 74) which is here translated as the translator’s “stance.”

3.3.4. The Translator’s Stance

With “*position traductive*” Berman refers to something less tangible than data about the translator’s person and life, his linguistic skills and his literary status and creations. What Berman tries to determine here is the way in which the translator perceives his task. The translator’s perception of the act of translation is

embedded in the poetics and ideology of the target culture, and needs to be scrutinised before the actual analysis of the translation – which may or may not be a reflection of this stance – can take place. Berman says, on this topic, that:

Tout traducteur entretient un rapport spécifique avec sa propre activité, c'est à dire a une certaine "conception" ou "perception" du traduire, de son sens, de ses finalités, de ses formes et modes. "Conception" et "perception" qui ne sont pas purement personnelles, puisque le traducteur est effectivement marqué par tout un discours historique, social, littéraire, idéologique sur la traduction (et l'écriture littéraire).
(Berman 1995: 74)

In Berman's theory of the translating subject, a description of the stance of the translator will thus mainly concern the following question: how does the translator perceive the activity of translation, i.e. what does he think a translating translator should be aiming for in his work? The search for the translator's stance can be considered as a search for the translator's own prescriptions or norms, or, in Berman's formulation:

La position traductive est, pour ainsi dire, le "compromis" entre la manière dont le traducteur perçoit en tant que sujet pris par la *pulsion de traduire*, la tâche de la traduction, et la manière dont il a "internalisé" le discours ambiant sur le traduire (les "normes"). (Berman 1995: 74-75)

The stance of Baudelaire the translator will be established in Chapter Five and further discussed in Chapter Six, on the basis of the few statements or comments made on the subject by Baudelaire, but it will reveal itself more clearly yet at the stage of the examination of the actual translations. Indeed, Berman says:

Ces positions [traductives] peuvent être *reconstituées* à partir des traductions elles-mêmes, qui les disent implicitement, et à partir des diverses énonciations que le traducteur a faites sur ses traductions, le traduire ou tous autres thèmes. (Berman 1995: 75)

Moreover, the stance of the translator is influenced by at least two elements which derive from his "position" as a translator, and which included the translator's being-in-language and his position as a writer, or, in Berman's words:

Elles [the translators' stances] sont par ailleurs liées à la *position langagière* des traducteurs: leur rapport aux langues étrangères et à la langue maternelle, leur être-en-langues (qui prend mille formes empiriques différentes, mais est toujours *un être-en-langues spécifique*, distinct des autres être-en-langues qui ne sont pas concernés par la traduction) et à leur *position scriptuaire* (leur rapport à l'écriture et aux œuvres). (Berman 1995: 75)

The information yielded under the heading of the translator's "position," i.e. his "position scriptuaire" and his "position langagière" can thus be further applied in determining the stance of the translator. The aim in defining the translator's stance will then be to give as many facts as possible to complete a picture of Baudelaire as a translator of English into French, which will be confirmed, contradicted, or both, by later textual analysis. This is not a question of building a pre-analytical network of assumptions, but of naming the *facts* that may or may not have influenced the translator's stance vis-à-vis the activity of translation, and also, as will shortly become clear, vis-à-vis the original œuvre and his specific task as a translator of that œuvre.

As mentioned above, Berman thinks that this description will help the critic to arrive at a "theory" of the translating subject – a theory which should then, in combination with the results emanating from the pre-readings, be tested out during the textual analyses of the translations:

Quand nous saurons prendre en vue en même temps position traductive, position langagière et position scriptuaire chez le traducteur, une "théorie du sujet traduisant" sera possible. (Berman 1995: 75)

It should therefore be firmly kept in mind that this theory of the translating subject is a series of relevant facts about Baudelaire's life, work and ideas which can only stand, not as a hypothetical, but as a hermeneutic construct, built for the purpose of better describing and explaining *why* the translator may have opted for this or that strategy. As Berman's own application of his critical method on different translations of a poem by John Donne shows, some elements in the "theory" of the translating subject are more pertinent than others, depending on the case at

hand, and it is also tricky sometimes to define, among the facts that become available from the pre-analytical enquiries, which ones have and which ones haven't influenced the translating process, but that should not stop one from carrying out this type of pre-analytical inquiries. Again for reasons of clarity, the findings of these pre-analytical enquiries have been separated from the actual textual analyses, because the amount of data that needs to be taken into consideration in order to fully establish Baudelaire's position and stance, is simply too vast to discuss in a coherent manner during the course of the analyses. Moreover, the specificity and the complexity of Baudelaire's project of translation, a topic which will be tackled in the next section, also demanded that this be handled separately from the actual analyses of his translations.

3.3.5. The Translator's Project

The next factor at which Berman asks the critic to look in order to explain a translator's approach to a particular translation is the translator's project ("le projet de traduction" (Berman 1995: 76)). The translator's project, which is specific for every translation, refers to the aggregate of aims which a translator may have for the transfer of a particular source text into a given target literature:

Le projet définit la manière dont, d'une part, le traducteur va accomplir la *translation* littéraire, d'autre part, assumer la traduction même, choisir un "mode" de traduction, une "manière de traduire." (Berman 1995: 76)¹³

The intentions of the translator are thus investigated, though without necessarily focussing solely on the textual expression of these intentions: one tries to uncover the interaction between meta-textual aims of *translatio* (whether or not these are made explicit), and the traces of these intentions and aims expressed in what Jakobson called the "translation proper." Every translator has a project for every translation he carries out, and the project is also a particular instance of the

¹³ Berman's use of the term "translation" in French has been explained in Chapter One section 1.2.4.

translator's stance, a stance which adapts itself, precisely, to each particular instance of translation:

Toute traduction conséquente est portée par un projet, ou visée articulée. Le projet ou visée sont déterminés à la fois par la position traductive [the translator's stance] et par les exigences à chaque fois spécifiques posées par l'œuvre à traduire. (Berman 1995: 77)

The project is thus not only a textual but also a meta-textual aim, and like the translator's stance, the project is naturally reflected in the translation itself, which means that the critic can do a preliminary investigation into the project of the translator, but has to test these findings on the actual translation and decide how much of the declared project can be retraced in the translation. This circular movement is a dynamics by which the critic can uncover the "truth" of a translation and its para-text:

Ici apparaît pour le critique un *cercle absolu*, mais non vicieux: il doit lire la traduction à partir de son projet, mais la vérité de ce projet ne nous est finalement pas accessible qu'à partir de la traduction elle-même et du type de *translation*[j9] littéraire qu'elle accomplit. *Car tout ce qu'un traducteur peut dire et écrire à propos de son projet n'a réalité que dans la traduction.* (Berman 1995: 77 – my italics in the last sentence)

The sentence in italics corresponds to the indication in Chapter Two, that one needs to examine sceptically the translator's statements (in units of para-text such as prefaces and notes), in the light of the choices which the translator actually makes in his translations.

Moreover, it is important that Berman's "vérité" here be understood in relative terms, because the aim is not so much to simply determine whether or not the translator has been "true" to his proclaimed project, but to which extent or degree the translation corresponds to the project, and what impact the project, and the extent to which it is carried out, has had on the result. Berman explains this very clearly:

La traduction n'est jamais que la réalisation du projet: elle va *où* la mène le projet, et *jusqu'où* la mène le projet. Elle ne nous dit la vérité du projet qu'en nous révélant *comment* il a été réalisé (et non, finalement, s'il a été réalisé) et quelles ont été les *conséquences* du projet par rapport à l'original. (Berman 1995: 77)

The examination of a translator's project is based on two types of reading: one is the reading of the translations, and the other is the reading of anything that the translator, or anyone else, may have said about the translations. The enquiry, then, is founded:

.... à la fois sur la lecture de la traduction ou des traductions, qui fait apparaître radiographiquement le projet, et sur *tout ce que le traducteur a pu dire en des textes (préfaces, postfaces, articles, entretiens, portant ou non sur la traduction: tout ici nous est indice)*.
(Berman 1995: 83 – my italics)

The italicised part of the quotation shows Berman's acute awareness of the importance of the para-texts surrounding a translation for uncovering the translator's project. A para-textual investigation into the project of a translator allows us to uncover the "truth" of the translator's project in a very direct manner, by measuring it both by what it claims and by what consequences of these claims can be found in the translations.

An examination of the translator's project is thus the aspect of Translation Criticism that takes into consideration the whole process of *translatio*, and more specifically, tries to determine which aims the translator had in mind when he made his choices in translation. If a description of a translation reveals the *how* and *what* of a translation, the project helps us to uncover the *why* of a particular translation, which, as indicated in Chapter Two, is an aspect of translation assessment that is missing from the descriptive methods. There now remains a last element in the search for the translator to complete the "theory of the translating subject." This is the translator's horizon.

3.3.6. The Translator's Horizon: Literary Horizon and Translational Horizon

A last step in this description of the “translating subject” is to picture the horizon of the translator, which includes both the literary and the translational horizon. As indicated earlier, Baudelaire’s particular status as poet-translator revealed the necessity of a discussion of that part of the literary horizon which refers to the translator’s own literary productions and tastes, and this inquiry will be carried out under the heading “Who is the translator?” Meanwhile, it is also important to describe the target literature into which the translation arrived, especially those parts of it that are relevant for one’s understanding of the possible intertextual relationships that exist between target text and target literature, and of the kind of reading of which Baudelaire’s translations are a trace. A description of the literary horizon of Poe’s short fiction will thus include an examination into the uses and existence, in French literature, of the short story, of fantastic and gothic literature, of the detective story and of American literature in general. This kind of information should then allow for a better determination of the type of intertextual connections that could be established between Poe’s fiction and French literature, by the French reading public and by the translator himself.

The translator’s translational horizon will also be treated separately, and it is mostly in this meaning that Berman understood “l’horizon du traducteur,” though his presentation of it shows that he also includes elements of what has been called the “literary horizon” in this discussion (Berman 1995: 79). Berman’s idea of a translational horizon is based on the hermeneutic thinking he has found in Ricoeur, Gadamer and Jauss (see Berman 1995: 79)¹⁴, and he defines it as “l’ensemble des paramètres langagiers, littéraires, culturels et historiques qui “déterminent” le sentir, l’agir et le penser d’un traducteur” (Berman 1995: 79), putting “déterminent” between quotation marks because “il ne s’agit pas de simples déterminations au sens de conditionnements” (Berman 1995: 79). To clarify this

¹⁴ On the concept of horizon, Berman gives, for Jauss, the following reference: “*Pour une critique littéraire*, Gallimard, coll. “Bibliothèque des Idées”, Paris, 1988” (Berman 1995: 79). No specific reference is given for Gadamer’s thoughts on this topic (or any other), and for Ricoeur Berman has previously referred to his “*Essais d’herméneutique II*, Seuil, coll. “Esprit”, Paris, 1986” (Berman 1995: 39).

point – which, incidentally, is also an implicit rejection of Toury’s approach – and to explain what Berman expects from a discussion on the translator’s translational and literary horizon, Berman gives the example of Philippe Brunet’s 1991 translation of Sappho’s poetry into French. A picture of the horizon of this translation covers the following (inexhaustive) list of elements: the state of French lyrical poetry at the time, the French public’s knowledge of Greek lyrical poetry and of Greek culture in general, the presence in the target literature of translations of Greek lyrical poetry and the expectations raised by these translations. Then there are the writings, discussions and debates on Greek poetry and prose available in French, and whatever elements that bear witness to the links that exist between French and Greek lyrical poetic culture. The horizon extends further still into the conclusions that are drawn from these data. For the translation of Sappho Berman indicates that the critic must also ask what the French public’s expectations regarding Greek poetry *in se* are, and what their expectations regarding lyrical poetry are *tout court*, and what rapport exists between French lyrical poetry and other poetic traditions. As the list indicates, under the heading “horizon du traducteur,” Berman mixes both elements linked to translation, and elements linked to literary poetics. That is why “l’horizon du traducteur” has been divided into two categories, and the relevant information has been logged either under the “literary horizon” or under the “translational horizon.”

An important point in establishing the translational horizon, one which refers back to the beginning of this chapter, namely the section on great translations, is to determine whether the translation is a retranslation, and, if other preceding translations are available of the same source text, to comparatively assess these. As Baudelaire was not the lone translator he was so often made out to be, this comparative work needs a separate chapter, where the history and nature of these parallel translations will also be outlined. In sum, the translational horizon of a translator focuses on the individual translator in a specific project and tries to determine the conditions and expectations, as far as translation quality and type is concerned, that reigned at the time when the project came about, without attempting to construct a framework to fit to *every* translation that was made in

that environment. An analysis of a translation which takes into account the multiple horizons (both literary and translational) of the translator will thus find itself in a healthy type of duality:

Ici, il est question, comme le disent Ricœur et Jauss, d'*horizon*, d'*expérience*, de *monde*, d'*action*, de *dé-* et de *recontextualisation* ... Ce sont des concepts à la fois "objectifs" et "subjectifs," "positifs" et "négatifs," qui pointent tous sur une finitude et une in-finitude.
(Berman 1995: 81)

By describing the translational (and even literary) horizon of a translation, the critic thus contextualizes the work of the translator within a certain epoch of translation, through data that will be both objective and subjective, and in a framework that is both limited and limitless at the same time – the factors one is asked to describe can never all be grasped in one moment, and one can't know fully in advance whether those one decides to retain will be relevant or not for one's understanding of the translator's work. The critic can establish the translational horizon of the translator thanks to information found in para-texts, both written by the translator and by other members of the target culture (especially critical comments on the translation in question), but as has been shown, these indices may need to be re-contextualised in order to uncover their real meaning.

3.3.7. The Reception of a Translation

The stage of investigation which rounds up all the inquiries and observations mentioned so far, and which can thus only be taken up *after* the analyses of the translations have also been carried out, is a description of the reception (and canonisation) of the translation in the target culture. Berman considers this stage in the description as "autonome ou intégré à d'autres étapes" (Berman 1995: 96), and has thus been integrated the issue of reception in the other stages. No separate chapter has been allotted to this topic, mainly because it is a vast subject, and many books already discuss in one way or another the interaction between

Baudelaire's translations of Poe's fiction and the target literature. The reception by the target public of Baudelaire's translations will come up, for instance, during the discussion of Baudelaire's translational horizon (Chapter Six), where some of the reactions which the Baudelaire translations provoked among the critics will be reviewed, and it will also come up in Chapters Four and Five. When the translator's position, stance, project and horizon (literary and translational) have been established, and when these factors have been retraced in the translations, the answer to the question why Baudelaire's translations were so successful in France will obviously become more clear.

3.3.8. Textual Analyses and Comparisons

As far as the textual analyses of translations are concerned, *Pour une critique des traductions* (Berman 1995) does not contain a description of method, but Berman does give a few guiding principles. Still, his own analyses and comparisons are obviously the most eloquent guidelines, and besides what he says over the course of his own applications, Berman limits his directions to indicating the manner and style in which the "confrontation" between different translations should take place, and how the evaluation should proceed. One major prescription should be noted here, namely the fact that Berman resolutely demands that the totality of a text (and not some fragments) should be studied:

La forme de l'analyse pourra différer selon, d'abord, qu'il s'agit d'une traduction ... de la traduction d'un *ensemble* ... ou d'une *œuvre entière* de traducteur. Dans tous les cas sont analysées des *totalités entières*, non des extraits isolés, ponctuels. (Berman 1995: 83)

In this sense, it could be stated that up until this day, no Translation Criticism has been done on the Baudelaire translations of Poe's short fiction, since the two major works which deal with the translations proper (Lemonnier 1928 and Quinn 1957), only work with fragments and pieces of several stories. Instead, this study will present a full analysis of two complete stories in translation, one of which is also compared with the full text of a rivalling translation. Comparing fragments,

on the vast œuvre that are the Baudelaire translations, could only have given a superficial impression, and the only exception to Berman's rule which this study makes appears in Chapter Six, where the translational horizon of the Baudelaire translations is discussed. In that chapter, the reader will encounter fragments of other rivalling translations of Poe's short fiction, which are briefly compared to Baudelaire's parallel texts. The idea is not to judge or assess these fragments in terms of "good" or "bad" translation, but to use them as the most eloquent examples possible of the practice and norms that reigned translation in Baudelaire's time.

As far as translation analysis and assessment or evaluation are concerned, no further prescriptions are given by Berman, apart from a last clear indication that the only ethical concern that the translation critic should have is whether the translator is cheating or not, and, as already indicated in the section on para-texts in Chapter One, cheating, for Berman, is either not showing the manipulations one carries out, or claiming these manipulations to be something they are not. Lastly, it is important to note that Berman indicates that Translation Criticism, like any act of criticism, is an essentially positive and productive activity. Once a particular translation has been described, and all the factors that help explain the translator's choices and strategies have been established, by alluding to his stance, project and position, and by contextualizing these in his literary and translational horizon, one is in a much more comfortable position to try and explain decisions that are crucial in a translation – and such explanations can then hardly be called "probabilistic." Furthermore, in the case of an historical translation, the criticism becomes productive when it opens the possibility for retranslation, i.e. when it can point out where the translation, though succeeding in its historical context, fails in a contemporary context. In Berman's words:

Appliquée à la littérature traduite, cette critique productive énoncera donc, ou s'efforcera d'articuler, les principes d'une retraduction de l'œuvre concernée, et donc de nouveaux projets de traduction. Il n'y a pas à proposer un nouveau projet (cela doit être l'œuvre des traducteurs eux-

mêmes) ni à jouer au donneur de conseils, mais à préparer le plus rigoureusement possible l'espace de jeu de la retraduction.
(Berman 1995: 97)

This, says Berman, is where Translation Criticism becomes an “acte productif, fécondant” (ibid.), and where it joins the type of rewriting, discussed in the first chapter of this study, which maintains the life-giving force both of what it rewrites, and of rewriting in general.

3.4. Conclusions

The framework for the pre-analytical stage of the enquiries, and the general aims and method of the textual analyses of the translations have now been introduced. The pre-analytical enquiries (Chapters Four, Five and Six) will consist of a description of the translator's position, which includes a description of the translator as a language user and as a foreign language user (the “position langagière”), and his position as a writer and rewriter (the “position scriptuaire”) (Berman 1995: 75). There is also the project of the translation, which, at least in its first description, asks what the translator may have said about his translations and about what he aimed to achieve by them. At the same time, the project of the translator is an expression of how the translator sees his task in a general way, i.e. the translator's stance, or the translator's own perception of the activity of translation in general. The literary horizon into which the translations were introduced will also be examined for the intertextual relationships that the translations could entertain with other texts in the target literature. Lastly, the translational horizon will also constitute an important part of the pre-analytical enquiries, and will describe the accepted norms and practice in translation during the time when Baudelaire was translating Poe, in order to establish which parts of it were absorbed by Baudelaire and applied in his translations.

Berman's method thus allows us to give a complete picture of the factors that may have played a part in a translator's decision-making process, and to connect these

with the observations emanating both from a reading of the translation as an independent text, and from a detailed textual-linguistic comparative analysis. Lastly, it should be emphasized that Berman demands no specific order for running through the stages of enquiry and analysis:

Ces trois moments [d'analyse] ne se succèdent pas linéairement. Si l'analyse de l'horizon est – en principe – préliminaire, celle de la position traductive et celle du projet peuvent difficilement être séparées.
(Berman 1995: 83)

Such flexibility which obeys common sense, makes presenting an application of Berman's approach a healthy exercise in independent appraisal and composition.

Chapter Four: Who is the Translator?

4.1. Introduction

As announced in the previous chapter, it is now time for a description of the translator, and of his position as a language user and as a member of the target literature. More precisely, the pre-analytical question “Who is the translator?” is here systematically elaborated in eight questions. Questions 4.2. to 4.6. investigate what Berman calls the translator’s “position langagière” and questions 4.7. to 4.9. concern his “position scriptuaire.” Some explanation regarding the use of “position” and “status” in this chapter is required. The term “status” is used to refer to the prestige and the recognition which Baudelaire was receiving as writer and rewriter inside and outside of the literary circles at the time when he translated Poe. The question of Baudelaire’s “position” is answered by determining what Baudelaire’s relationship to writing was, in other words, by defining Baudelaire’s own personal tastes and preferences in literature and poetics, and the genres and styles with which he was most familiar and which could be considered as his personal literary horizon. This chapter therefore features a discussion on Baudelaire’s aesthetics, with a specific interest in the important links that exist between these aesthetics and Poe’s views on the subject.

4.2. What was the translator’s command of the source language when he began the translations?

There seems no need to confirm that Baudelaire’s mother tongue was French, and that English was for him a foreign language, in the sense that he probably had what would now be called an intermediate learner’s command of it when he discovered Poe. Baudelaire was born into a French-speaking family, but his mother had a good command of English, and he may have heard her speak it as a child, which would mean that he had very early contacts with the English

language. Lemonnier confirms that Mme Dufays, Baudelaire's mother, was born in London of French parents, and came back to France with a good command of English. Further evidence of Baudelaire's mother's knowledge of English lies in the fact that Baudelaire sent his mother the original versions of Poe's poems:

On ne sait à quel âge elle quitta l'Angleterre, mais elle connaissait l'anglais en rentrant en France, puisque son fils lui envoyait à lire des poèmes de Poe dans l'original. (Lemonnier 1962: xxii)

Regarding Baudelaire's own knowledge of English there seems to be overall though largely implicit agreement that, upon his discovery of Poe in 1846 or 1847, Baudelaire's English was not good enough to begin the translations of Poe's work. Baudelaire himself admitted this six years later, saying of his English skills at the time: "J'avais beaucoup oublié l'anglais, ce qui rendait la besogne encore plus difficile" (Correspondances I 1973 [1852]: 130). Indeed, referring to Baudelaire's translation of Poe's "Mesmeric Revelation," published in *La liberté de penser* in July 1848, Patrick Quinn confirms that:

... in 1848, his knowledge of English was not adequate to this purpose [of translating correctly] and the original version of "Révélation magnétique" contains a good many slips. (Quinn 1957: 96)

Later versions of this translation still contain some important errors, such as the following one, pointed out by both Quinn and Richard: throughout the story, instead of "sleep-waker" (someone who is awake while being physically asleep) Baudelaire must have read "sleep-walker," and consequently translated this as "sommnambule," which causes confusion throughout the translation (Richard 1989: 1411n, Quinn 1957: 96). It shows, moreover, that Baudelaire may not have grasped the importance for Poe of this wakeful sleeping and dreaming, an issue which will be relevant for the analysis of Baudelaire's translation of "The Fall of the House of Usher" (Chapter Seven).

4.3. Did the translator's command of the source language change over the course of his work as a translator?

There is a four-year interval between the publication of “Révélation magnétique” (Baudelaire’s first translation of a Poe story) and Baudelaire’s second attempt at translating a story by Poe, “Bérénice,” published in *L’Illustration* in 1852, and this is most likely due to the fact that the poet lacked both the skills and the confidence to start working on the translations – that, at least, is the explanation forwarded by Quinn, an explanation with which the present author concurs:

The difficulties which Baudelaire must have experienced in working with it [Poe’s English] undoubtedly forced him to admit that if he were to prepare merely competent translations his linguistic endowments would have to be improved. (Quinn 1957: 97)

It is ironic that it is precisely Patrick Quinn who acknowledges the four-year interval between Baudelaire’s first and second published translation, because the main import of Quinn’s *The French Face of Poe* is a defence of anything and everything that Baudelaire may have done both with Poe’s image and with the translations, and constitutes a commentary that stands out for its one-sidedness. Quinn’s explanation for the four-year interval is highly plausible: there is nothing else which could have stopped Baudelaire during that period from working on the translations, and it was work which became a very welcome and steady source of income.¹⁵ Besides Quinn, Lemonnier also discusses this four-year interval in a lot of detail, but unfortunately only treats it in the light of Baudelaire’s proclaimed enthusiasm at his discovery. The passages which are alluded to here are also an example of the kind of lyrical and eulogistic “public epi-text” that shows a clear prejudice in favour of the translator (Lemonnier 1928: 101-120).

¹⁵ Pichois and Ziegler’s investigation into Baudelaire’s financial circumstances shows that translation was by far Baudelaire’s most lucrative literary enterprise (see Pichois and Ziegler 1996: 501). Moreover, Baudelaire himself called translation “un moyen paresseux de battre monnaie” (Correspondances II 1973 [1865]: 467), a statement which will reappear for its implications regarding Baudelaire’s stance as a translator (Chapter Five).

4.4. Did the translator have a bilingual command of the target language and the source language?

If Baudelaire's English was intermediate when he first encountered Poe, it obviously improved over the four years between 1848 and 1852, the year in which he started to regularly publish his translations of Poe stories in various magazines. In 1852 he says of his English and of his translations: "Mais maintenant, je le sais très bien. Enfin, je crois que j'ai mené la chose à bon port" (Correspondances I 1973 [1852]: 192). Baudelaire's friend Georges Asselineau was to comment on how Baudelaire prepared himself for the translations and says of the four-year interval:

Ces quatre années, il les employa à consulter, à s'enquérir, à se perfectionner dans la langue anglaise, et à entrer en communication de plus en plus intime avec son auteur. (quoted in Lemonnier 1928: 139)

Baudelaire's English must have improved even more after 1852, during the period which he spent polishing up his first collection of translations, the *Histoires extraordinaires*, to be published finally in 1856.

Baudelaire's lack of linguistic competence, which can certainly be said to have affected his work up until 1852, is an important issue as far as this study is concerned. Even if Baudelaire did improve his English skills to an advanced level, his initial linguistic incompetence, and the cultural incomprehension which this probably entailed, remain factors to be reckoned with. It may very well have affected the way Baudelaire approached Poe's work, and also, very importantly, it may have influenced the way he interpreted whatever biographical information he received on Poe, and the reputation he built for Poe on the basis of that. In the course of the analyses of the translations, the possibility of Baudelaire's linguistic deficiency should and will therefore be taken into account, especially on those occasions where no other acceptable explanation for errors is available.

4.5. Did the translator know and write in any other languages?

Baudelaire did not write in any other languages than French and English, but, as many French intellectuals of his time, may have had some notions of German. Besides that, no specific foreign-language activities are noted, at least not in any other languages than English.

4.6. Did the translator translate other same source language texts, or only those by the author in question?

Baudelaire also translated a few other texts, specifically poems by English authors other than Poe. In 1846 he published under his own name a novella in three instalments, which was later discovered to be a translation of “The Young Enchanter,” a story by the Irish author Reverend Croly (Ruff 1968: 710). Ruff concurs with Richard and Quinn when he says of “Le jeune enchanteur” that:

Baudelaire ne possédait alors qu’une imparfaite connaissance de l’anglais et les contresens ne manquent pas dans ce premier essai, comme dans les premières traductions d’Edgar Poe. (Ruff 1968: 710)

In 1860, three years after the publication of the *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires*, the second collection of Poe translations, Baudelaire translated part of a poem by Longfellow, which was later erroneously included in Baudelaire’s *Fleurs du Mal* (Ruff 1968: 711). There are also two English folk songs, and finally there is Thomas Hood’s “The Bridge of Sighs”, which Baudelaire translated in 1865 and which (still) contains proof of his lack of linguistic competence (Ruff 1968: 721). Ruff points out, for instance, that Baudelaire translated Hood’s first phrase “One more unfortunate” (where “more” is the adjective of degree) as “encore une infortunée de plus” (“yet another unfortunate one”) (Ruff 1968: 721). It is interesting to note that this poem features in Poe’s critical essay “The Poetic Principle”, which Baudelaire plagiarised but never translated, and that this is probably where he found it. This topic will be

treated in detail during the discussion of Baudelaire's aesthetics at the end of this chapter.

4.7. Did the translator write only as translator, or did he write and publish other texts too?

In the case of one of France's most famous poets this is obviously a rhetorical question and the reader is referred to the next sections of this chapter.

4.8. If the translator also wrote as an author, what was his status in the literary system?

In order to answer the question of Baudelaire's status, mention will have to be made of Baudelaire's publications in fields other than translation, in order to allow a better understanding of the prestige that followed from these. What is of particular interest here is the status that Baudelaire had as a poet and a critic, at the time when he was writing the translations. The aim is not, however, to give an exhaustive description of Baudelaire's own work, and the discussion has therefore been limited to those periods which are relevant for his career as a poet-translator. Three moments in Baudelaire's time as a critic and (published) poet are thus distinguished, a distinction which is entirely determined by the interest in Baudelaire's career as a translator. This section will then be concluded with a discussion of what has been called the "legend" of Baudelaire.

The three periods that are here distinguished are defined as follows: first, the time around 1846-1847, when Baudelaire discovered Poe; secondly, the period between 1848 and 1856 (the year of the publication of the *Histoires extraordinaires*), and third, the time after 1856, which was also the year preceding the publication of *Les fleurs du Mal*. For each period, an enumeration of the publications will be given, followed by a section which aims to give an

impression of the status which those publications conveyed on Baudelaire as a member of the target literature.

4.8.1. The Period around 1846-1847

4.8.1.1. Baudelaire's Publications around 1846-1847

In 1846-1847 Baudelaire was still unknown to the French public. In 1844 he had published either anonymously or under his name a few articles in the magazine *le Corsaire-Satan* (Ruff 1968: 26), and in 1845, Baudelaire published his *Salon de 1845*, which constitutes a review of the art exhibition held in Paris the same year, and a poem entitled "A une dame créole" (Ruff 1968: 26-27).

In 1846 he published another essay on art, "Le musée classique du Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle," and his previously mentioned unavowed translation of "The Young Enchanter", which he published under the name of Charles Baudelaire-Dufays (Ruff 1968: 711). That year two pieces called "Choix de maximes consolantes sur l'amour" and "Conseils aux jeunes littérateurs" also came out, and after these, the more important *Salon de 1846*. This *Salon* was much more substantial than the previous one, and its contents reached beyond those of the 1846 exhibition, containing sections on literary criticism, on Romanticism, on the use of colour, on portrait-painting, etc. (O.C.II 1976: 415-493).

In 1846 Baudelaire also published two poems: "A une Indienne" (later called "A une Malabaraise") and "l'Impénitent" (later called "Don Juan aux enfers") (Ruff 1968: 26). The latter poem was very well received:

Il est significatif que ce poème de jeunesse fut un des mieux accueillis du vivant de Baudelaire, comme après sa mort. (Robb 1993: 122)

In 1847 Baudelaire finally managed to get "La Fanfarlo" published, in the *Bulletin de la Société des Gens de Lettres* (Ruff 1968: 26). In this caricaturised

autobiographical novella, the until then largely unpublished Baudelaire is personified, significantly, by a *published* poet called Samuel Cramer (O.C. I 1975: 553-580).

4.8.1.2. Baudelaire's Status around 1846-1847

In 1846 Baudelaire's reputation as a poet was nearly inexistent. He was living in Paris and courted the literary giants of the time (Hugo, Balzac, Sainte-Beuve), sending them letters and dedicating poems to them. He was becoming known as an aspiring poet in literary circles, where his most important friends were Georges Asselineau, Gérard de Nerval, Théophile Gautier, and Champfleury. Still, even to these people, Baudelaire was first known as an art critic, for his *Salons*, especially the *Salon* of 1846:

Dans les journaux, Baudelaire est connu surtout comme critique d'art. Le *Salon de 1845* ne passa pas inaperçu; l'année suivante, plusieurs journaux annoncent le *Salon de 1846* et lui consacrent des comptes rendus élogieux. (Robb 1993: 84)

It was his acquaintance with other authors and (published) poets which helped to generate a reputation for Baudelaire as a man of letters – as Robb points out, the reviews of Baudelaire's *Salons* were usually favours rendered by friends of his and their opinions were therefore largely “inspired” (not to say dictated) by the author of the *Salons*:

Ces témoignages proviennent presque tous, inévitablement, de milieux fréquentés par le poète. ... ainsi, le long compte rendu du *Salon de 1846* par Henry Murger lui fit probablement dicté par l'auteur du *Salon*; les lignes que Champfleury consacre au premier *Salon* dans le *Corsaire-Satan* du 27 mai 1845 furent certainement inspirées par Baudelaire, comme le prouve une lettre. (Robb 1993: 83)

Baudelaire meanwhile lived in poverty and precariousness and led what was known then as a bohemian lifestyle. He strolled on the Parisian boulevards, visited the cabarets, lived (off and on) with his Creole mistress, and participated in hash

and opium smoking sessions: experiences which, copying Thomas de Quincey and, closer to home, Théophile Gautier, he described in *Les paradis artificiels*.¹⁶ Of the two, only opium continued to be a drug Baudelaire used regularly, since he also used it in the form of laudanum to quell the symptoms of his syphilis:

Le dawamesk [hashish] n'a guère satisfait sa curiosité; l'opium, sous la forme du laudanum, lui devint bientôt "une vieille et terrible amie: comme toutes les amies, hélas! féconde en caresses et en trahisons" (*La chambre double*). (Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 220)¹⁷

Baudelaire also drank large quantities of wine and lived and wrote, for a large part, in the cafés he visited. The following testimony, recorded by Pichois and Ziegler, comes from an acquaintance of those days, Charles Toubin:

... Charles Toubin: "Baudelaire composait au café et dans la rue. Ses consommations au café étaient le vin blanc, et il ne consentait pas à ce qu'on lui en offrit d'autre. Ce qui ne l'empêchait pas, rencontrant un compagnon, de se faire inviter à dîner ... (quoted in Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 251)

The precariousness of the poet's life in these years will become a part of the "legend" that he slowly created for himself and which will be discussed at the end of this section. So far then, for the first period, one can conclude that at the time when Baudelaire made his discovery of Poe's short fiction (in Isabelle Meunier's translation – see Chapter Six), he was a poor unpublished poet who had some reputation as an art critic. Still, it should not be overlooked that, though his poetry was unpublished, he was at the time already working on the poems that would later become famous.

¹⁶ Théophile Gautier published an article called "Le Club des Hachichins" in the *Revue des deux mondes* of February 1, 1846 (Pichois and Ziegler 1996: 219).

¹⁷ *La chambre double*: a prose poem from the collection *Le spleen de Paris* (O.C. I 1975: 280-282).

4.8.2. The Period from 1848-1856

4.8.2.1. Baudelaire's Publications from 1848 to 1856

In the period between Baudelaire's discovery of Poe and the first publication of the *Histoires extraordinaires*, Baudelaire's literary reputation rose, though it was not a poet's reputation, but that of an art critic and literary reviewer, and especially of translator and specialist of Poe. A list of the translations which Baudelaire published during this period, as established by Claude Richard, is given in Appendix A.

In 1848 Baudelaire, encouraged by the fact that the new republican government had promised complete freedom of the press, founded with his friends Champfleury and Charles Toubin *Le salut public*, a paper which, due to severe financial restrictions, only ran for two issues (Robb 1993: 81). In April 1848 Baudelaire became editorial secretary for a newspaper, *La tribune nationale* (Ruff 1968: 26). He also published his first translation of a story by Poe, "Révélation magnétique" which was discussed earlier for the many "slips" it contained. Finally, as Claude Pichois shows, the poem "Le vin de l'assassin," which Baudelaire is known to have recited to friends, probably existed but was not published in 1848, as some biographers seem to believe, and the first publication of this poem most likely took place in 1853 (O.C. I 1975: 1053-1054n).

In 1849 Baudelaire seems to have published nothing at all, while in 1850 three poems of his appeared, of which "Le reniement de Saint Pierre" is the most famous. It was to become one of the poems which were censored during the trial of *Les fleurs du Mal* (Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 360).

In March 1851 Baudelaire published a piece on the effects of hash smoking (later to be incorporated in *Les paradis artificiels*) and, more importantly, eleven of his

poems appeared in instalments, and became a collection which came out soon after, under the title “Les limbes”:¹⁸

Et, le 9 avril 1851, dans *le Messager de l'Assemblée*, où avait paru en mars “Du vin et du hachisch” (esquisse des *Paradis artificiels*), le titre coiffa, avec une indication semblable, onze sonnets des futures *Fleurs du Mal*: le recueil *Les limbes* “doit paraître chez Michel Lévy.”
(Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 279)

In 1852 Baudelaire published another essay on painting and art and two of his poems, the “Crépuscules.” It was also in 1852 that Baudelaire published the first biographical essay on Poe, “Edgar Allan Poe, sa vie et ses ouvrages,” a publication which will be examined in detail in Chapter Five. From this year onwards and up until 1856, the translations which Baudelaire was preparing for the *Histoires extraordinaires* appeared regularly in various magazines, helping to pre-establish more and more firmly his reputation as *the* translator of Poe (see Appendix A).

In 1853, besides a text called “Morale du Joujou,” all Baudelaire published were three translations of Poe stories. In 1854, Baudelaire again published only translations of Poe stories (ten of them), and in 1855, Baudelaire published seventeen translated stories by Poe. He also republished the two “Crépuscule” poems and two new prose poems: “Le crépuscule du soir” (O.C. I 1975: 311-312) and “La solitude” (O.C. I 1975: 313-314), which both became a part of *Le spleen de Paris* (Ruff 1968: 27). Baudelaire published another essay on art (“L’Exposition universelle”) and in June 1855, the magazine *Revue des deux mondes*, which had published many of his (and other people’s) translations from Poe, published eighteen of Baudelaire’s poems, under the title “Les fleurs du Mal”. Baudelaire also published a critical essay called “De l’essence du rire et généralement du comique dans l’art plastique” (Ruff 1968: 27).

¹⁸ Robb explains that this title is derived, possibly, from the economist and philosopher Fourier’s term “périodes limbiques” (the age of social discord which every industrial society is bound to experience before reaching a state of harmony) and, in a more specifically French sense, to the young generation which after 1848 felt excluded from power and aspired after a more democratic future, the *bousingots*, whom will be discussed in section 4.9.2.4. (Robb 1993: 186).

According to Ruff it is also in 1855 that Baudelaire began his note-taking for a small book that was later called *Mon cœur mis à nu* (Ruff 1968: 27), but Pichois and Ziegler put the preparation period between 1859 and 1865, while the period between 1855 and 1962 covers note-taking for the *Fusées*, which is often grouped together with *Mon cœur mis à nu* and *Hygiène* under the caption *Journaux intimes* (Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 445). *Mon cœur mis à nu* is mentioned here because the title is a direct translation of “My heart laid bare” from Poe’s *Marginalia*, a piece in which Poe challenged the reader to write “a very little book” to open “the road to immortal renown,” by being “true to its title” (Poe 1984 [1848]: 1423). Someone with Baudelaire’s temperament and ambitions, and with the admiration he felt for Poe (Baudelaire had by then discovered Poe’s theoretical essays on literature and art), could not leave unanswered Poe’s challenge, though Baudelaire seems to have taken it more seriously than Poe would ever have suspected:

But to write it – *there* is the rub. No man dare write it. No man ever will dare write it. No man *could* write it, even if he dared. The paper would shrivel and blaze at every touch of the fiery pen. (Poe 1984 [1848]: 1423)

The combustion of Baudelaire’s *Mon cœur mis à nu* never did take place (French morals being more tolerant than those in America), and the texts which finally constituted *Mon cœur mis à nu* were edited by Poulet-Malassis and published posthumously by Eugène Crépet in 1887. They constitute a sort of diary, a record of Baudelaire’s opinions, emotions, preferences and dislikes, in which Baudelaire freely vents his feelings on subjects ranging from the sea to sexual intercourse (O.C. I 1975: 676-708).

In 1856, March to be precise, the *Histoires extraordinaires* finally appeared, after Baudelaire had taken another three to four years to polish up his translations. He had also experienced a number of personal and financial setbacks which had prevented him from delivering the manuscript sooner, as the following lines from a letter which he wrote to his mother in 1853, testify:

Je vivais dans une maison où la maîtresse [his lover, Jeanne Duval] me faisait tellement souffrir, par sa ruse, par ses criailleries, par ses

tromperies, et j'étais si mal, que je m'en suis allé ... Le 10 Janvier [1852], mon traité m'obligeait à livrer le livre [*Histoires extraordinaires*], j'ai touché mon argent, et j'ai livré à l'imprimeur un manuscrit tellement informe, qu'après la *composition* des premières feuilles, je me suis aperçu que les *corrections* et *remaniements* à faire étaient si considérables qu'il valait mieux défaire les *formes* et *recomposer à neuf*. ... Ce livre était le point de départ d'une vie nouvelle.

(Correspondances I 1973 [1853]: 210-211 – the italics are Baudelaire's)

Three years after writing this letter, which illustrates how difficult the task of translating Poe was for Baudelaire, the *Histoires extraordinaires* were finally published, and nine months after that, Baudelaire signed his contract with Poulet-Malassis and de Broise to publish *Les fleurs du Mal* (Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 343).

4.8.2.2. Baudelaire's Status from 1848 to 1856

It can be inferred from the above chronology of publications, that in the time before the publication of *Les fleurs du Mal*, which made the translator famous as being *also* a poet, Baudelaire had become known mainly for his essays and translations of Poe. Ruff suggests that:

Baudelaire a peut-être été plus connu du grand public, de son vivant, par ses traductions d'Edgar Poe que par son œuvre poétique.
(Ruff 1968: 710)

Many other scholars confirm the fact that Baudelaire's literary reputation was first and foremost established as the translator of Edgar Allan Poe. Moreover, in 1852 Baudelaire published his biographical essay on Poe, and it was because of this essay, and also because of the regular announcement of the imminent publication of the *Histoires extraordinaires* for 1852 (instead of 1856), that the public was not just aware of his existence, but was waiting for *his* translations of Poe:

Aussi la traduction de Baudelaire est-elle annoncée bien avant de paraître; elle est attendue avec impatience: "M. Charles Baudelaire prépare, écrivait-on au début de 1853, une traduction des œuvres de Poe, qui

paraîtra prochainement à la librairie de Lecou” (*Journal d’Alençon* 9 janvier 1853). C’est la traduction de Borghers qui paraît; mais, en en rendant compte, Barbey d’Aurevilly est étonné et déçu: “On avait d’abord parlé d’une traduction de Baudelaire. Mais cette traduction n’a pas été publiée et ne le sera probablement pas d’ici longtemps.” (Lemonnier 1962: xxvii)¹⁹

Remembering the discussion on *kairos* in Chapter Three, a few comments should here be made with regards to the way in which the Baudelaire translations were announced to the public. If Baudelaire was the *Kairos* to do these translations, this was partly thanks to the fact that the poet carefully cleared the field for himself, and, so to speak, created his own *kairos*. Several elements helped him in this process: the assistance he received from acquaintances and friends among the literati of Paris (such as Barbey d’Aurevilly, an eminent critic at the time), his own access to the literary press and his regular reminders to the public of his forthcoming collection of translations, and, most importantly, the 1852 publication of the sensational biographical essay on Poe; all combined to turn Baudelaire into *the* Poe specialist of the day. This had the effect of warming the public for the Baudelaire translations, and not for those that were being produced and published by others at the same time. Moreover, most of the translations in the *Histoires extraordinaires* had already been published in various magazines and periodicals before they came out in the collection, which probably helped even further in rousing the public’s interest in Baudelaire’s collection of translations. It can thus already be stated that, if there was *kairos* in the moment of Baudelaire’s publication of the *Histoires extraordinaires*, and if Baudelaire became the *Kairos* to translate Poe, this opportunity was in many ways created by Baudelaire himself.

Returning to his life and status as a poet, it is noted by all those who have studied Baudelaire that he was careful and persistent in the manipulations of his own image. As he took a long time in preparing *Les fleurs du Mal*, Baudelaire’s literary contemporaries were, by the time this volume of poetry finally did come out, fully aware of the poet’s existence. However, even the nineteenth-century

¹⁹ The “Borghers” referred to here is the pseudonym of Amédée Pichot. In Chapter Eight one of Pichot’s translations will also be analysed and examined.

critics were not unaware of the fact that the image of the poet had already been created and preceded his work. In 1855, one of them ridicules the strong, and in his opinion unfounded, reputation which Baudelaire's friends attributed to him:

.... il a surtout la réputation d'avoir une réputation. C'est ce phénomène, favorisé par l'essor du journalisme, que Louis Goudall évoque dans le *Figaro* du 4 Novembre 1855, quatre mois après la publication de dix-huit *Fleurs du mal* dans la *Revue des deux mondes*: "Il faut qu'il soit véritablement un homme fort, pour avoir fait de tout Paris la dupe d'une mystification qui a duré près de dix ans. Pendant dix ans, en effet, M. Baudelaire a réussi à se faire passer dans le monde des lettres pour un poète de génie ... il récitait quelques-uns de ses vers à un petit nombre d'initiés." (Robb 1993: 88)

Lemonnier quotes Théophile Gautier, the poet, author, art critic and friend of Baudelaire, who commented on the reputation of the unpublished Baudelaire:

"On nous menace de Baudelaire," disait Gautier, "on nous dit que lorsqu'il imprimera ses vers, Musset, Laprade et moi, nous serons dispersés en fumée." (Lemonnier 1928: 116)

This type of image-building lies at the basis of Baudelaire's reputation and is an important aspect of Baudelaire's biography, which will be discussed in more detail in section 4.8.4. ("The Legend of Baudelaire").

4.8.3. The Period after 1856

4.8.3.1. Baudelaire's Publications after 1856

In 1857 it was first the *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires* (the second volume of translations of Poe's stories) that were put on the market in March (Richard 1989: 1586), and then *Les fleurs du Mal*, which were sold from June onwards but were almost immediately censored. Baudelaire and his publishers lost the subsequent trial and six poems had to be taken out of the collection. The consequences of the trial for Baudelaire's reputation were very important and will also be discussed in section 4.8.4.. In 1857 Baudelaire also published six prose poems under the title

“Poèmes nocturnes,” an essay on caricatures and a review of *Madame Bovary*. It was thus in 1857, a year after the appearance of the first volume of translations, and from the publication of *Les fleurs du Mal* and the subsequent trial onwards, that Baudelaire’s name as a poet began to be more widely known.

4.8.3.2. Baudelaire’s Status after 1856

Again, at the publication of the *Fleurs du Mal*, one critic wrote ironically about Baudelaire’s reputation in the *Figaro* of July 1857:

M. Charles Baudelaire est, depuis une quinzaine d’années, un poète immense pour un petit cercle d’individus dont la vanité, en le saluant Dieu ou à peu près, faisait une assez bonne spéculation.
(quoted in Ruff 1968: 34)

Pichois and Ziegler state that around that time, Baudelaire was “connu comme le traducteur d’Edgar Poe” (Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 344). This status, as *the* Poe translator should, as has already been pointed out, be attributed to a number of factors, among which Baudelaire’s biographical essay on Poe, “Edgar Poe, sa vie et ses ouvrages” which had appeared in 1852. Though it took a long time for Baudelaire the poet to be appreciated by the general public, he received, however, at an early stage, support from his contemporaries. Victor Hugo, Barbey d’Aurevilly, Theodore de Banville, Gustave Flaubert, Leconte de Lisle, all came to reassure the poet after the trial and confirmed, be it in private letters, the superiority of Baudelaire’s verses:

Sous la plume de Flaubert, le 13 juillet, étaient venues des formules justes: “Vous avez trouvé le moyen de rajeunir le romantisme. ... Vous êtes résistant comme le marbre et pénétrant comme un brouillard.” Victor Hugo n’est pas en reste: “Vos *Fleurs du Mal* rayonnent et éblouissent comme des étoiles. ... Une des rares décorations que le régime actuel peut accorder, vous venez de le recevoir. Ce qu’il appelle la justice vous a condamné au nom de ce qu’il appelle sa morale.”
(Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 377)

The private nature of this acclaim lasted until 1862, when the publication of Baudelaire's prose poems was followed by public praise from, among others, Théodore de Banville, who writes in the *Boulevard* of August 1862:

Un véritable événement littéraire a eu lieu: je veux vous parler de la publication des poèmes en prose de Charles Baudelaire dans le feuilleton de *la Presse*. Ces courts chef d'œuvres, artistement achevés, ... n'ont eu qu'à se montrer pour faire tomber en poussière la foule des colosses prétentieux et vides. (quoted in Ruff 1968: 36)

From the 1860's onwards, then, the star of Baudelaire the poet finally found its place in the firmament of French literature. In the meantime, the trial which had followed the publication of the *Fleurs du Mal* in 1857 had ensured for Baudelaire the reputation he had, in many ways, been striving to obtain.

4.8.4. The Legend of Baudelaire

The status which Baudelaire had during his lifetime and after cannot be discussed without referring to what Pichois and Ziegler and also Robb call the "legend" of Baudelaire, by which they allude to the many ways in which Baudelaire managed to create a certain image for himself. The trial of the *Fleurs du Mal* was obviously instrumental in giving Baudelaire a reputation linked to scandal, and it must be added that it came not altogether unexpectedly. Flaubert had stood trial for his *Madame Bovary*, and one of Baudelaire's poems had already been threatened with censure a few years earlier (see Pichois and Ziegler 1996: 346).

For *Les fleurs du Mal* Baudelaire was convicted of offending only the public morals, but not the religious code, and was ordered to pay a three hundred franc fine (a large sum in those days) and to delete six poems from the collection.²⁰ The publication and sale of these poems remained illegal in France until 1949. The trial made Baudelaire famous among the general public, permanently tainting his

²⁰ The six poems were: "Les bijoux," "Le léthé," "A celle qui est trop gaie," one of the poems entitled "Femmes damnées," "Lesbos" and "Les métamorphoses du vampire" (Pichois and Ziegler 1996: 362).

reputation with scandal, and thus played an important part in the construction of the “legend” of Baudelaire:

Le procès a fait de Baudelaire un homme public. Il lui a donné une existence visible, une réputation, parfois douteuse, parfois détestable, les effets de la condamnation s’ajoutant aux premiers éléments de la légende qui reçut elle-même une confirmation de cette mise au ban.
(Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 375)

The commotion caused by the trial lasted until the end of 1858, and then calmed down. Meanwhile, the legend of Baudelaire the eccentric poet continued to grow, fed both by the poet’s way of life and by the obscurity, the novelty and the strangeness of his writings and his opinions. Most authors on Baudelaire have discussed at some point his continuous efforts to surprise and shock (though not necessarily in a moral sense), and examples abound of Baudelaire’s attempts to bewilder his acquaintances – attempts which sometimes failed, as he was not the only eccentric in Paris at that time. The following is a report from Maxime du Camp:

Lui-même, il teint ses cheveux en vert sans parvenir à provoquer – lors d’une rencontre – l’étonnement de Maxime du Camp: “Vous ne trouvez rien d’anormal en moi ? – Mais non, – Cependant j’ai des cheveux verts, et ça n’est pas commun.” Je répliquai: “Tout le monde a des cheveux plus ou moins verts, si les vôtres étaient bleu de ciel, ça pourrait me surprendre: mais des cheveux verts, il y en a sous bien des chapeaux à Paris.”
(Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 383)

Pichois and Ziegler not only attribute a willed eccentricity to Baudelaire, but also a feeling of superiority, which arose especially once the poet’s reputation was established:

Le sentiment de supériorité dont s’accompagne la création de la légende dans une esthétique de l’étonnement est bien perceptible, particulièrement durant les années qui suivent la publication des *Fleurs du Mal* ...
(Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 384)

As will be shown, Baudelaire’s aim to be seen as a marginal and eccentric person was achieved not only by his behaviour in public, but also by his poetry, in which

feature a number of characters which were postures for the poet, and with which he came to be identified.

4.8.5. First Translator, Then Poet

To sum up the data on Baudelaire's publications and status as a poet and critic, it can now be stated that, at the time when Baudelaire discovered Poe, he had a small reputation as an art critic, and was known mainly by his literary friends as an aspiring poet. Six years later, at the time of the publication of the *Histoires extraordinaires*, Baudelaire was known for his translations and for his biographical essay on Poe (which appeared in 1852), but as a poet he was still an unknown, and when he published the *Fleurs du Mal* a year later, this was still the case:

Lorsqu'il les publia en 1857 et fut rendu célèbre par le procès qui contribua à le déclasser un peu plus, il n'était connu que de quelques uns par ses *Salons* de 1845 et 1846 et d'un plus grand nombre par sa première traduction de Poe. (Milner & Pichois 1996: 379)

From a chronological and bibliographical perspective, but also considering the reactions from his contemporaries in the literary system, Baudelaire's status as a poet of consequence was only really established from the 1860s onwards, and his reputation became linked to scandal and eccentricity. By that time, however, he had already firmly positioned himself as *the* translator and specialist of Poe.

4.9. If the translator also wrote as an author, what was his position in the literary system?

This section will determine Baudelaire's position in the literary system, and describe Baudelaire's place in French literature in terms of the topoï and aesthetics of his work. The poet's aesthetics (a term which here refers to his guiding principles of artistic appreciation and creation) is where the fundamental

distinction between himself and his predecessors and contemporaries begins. From the chronology that was given in the preceding sections, it has become clear that Baudelaire was bathing in Poe's influence during his formative years as a poet. In other words, Poe's aesthetics were present from the beginning of Baudelaire's own career as a poet, since he was already translating Poe while he was writing his own poetry, long before he became a published poet of any consequence. Poe's ideas on artistic creation, which can be found in his critical essays, thus were an important source of Baudelaire's views on the topic. This exchange, which is not only fundamental to the formulation of Baudelaire's aesthetics, but also constitutes a demonstration of how the translator approached "his" author, will therefore be discussed in the following sections.

With these remarks in mind, and considering that the scope of a topic like "the position of Baudelaire in French literature" could fill about five doctoral theses, the focus is now on those aspects that seemed most relevant for the present study. This could have lead to a skewed picture, but by consulting and combining sources which exclude Poe from the equation (e.g. Pichois & Ziegler 1996 and especially Robb 1993), along with sources that take Poe's influence on Baudelaire into account (e.g. Seylaz 1923, Lemonnier 1928, Valéry 1957), this section gives an acceptable and balanced picture of the position and aesthetics of Baudelaire as an active player on the field of French literature.

4.9.1. The Importance of Baudelaire

Everyone agrees that Baudelaire occupies a unique and pivotal position in French literature, and that this makes him difficult to place within any particular genre, or uniformly to categorize his work, as Souiller & Troubetzkoy affirm:

Le rôle majeur joué par Baudelaire dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle défie toutes les chronologies, absolues comme relatives, et les classifications des esprits. (Souiller & Troubetzkoy 1997: 382)

Several authors have pointed out that Baudelaire's work, though occupying a category of its own, nonetheless has both romantic and classical aspects (see, for instance, Peyre's essay "Baudelaire, Romantic and Classical" (Peyre 1962: 19-28)). Baudelaire has also been accused, especially during the second half of the nineteenth century, of being a realist, but as Auerbach warns, this epithet needs to be put in the perspective of the time when it was applied:

... since in the nineteenth century the word "realism" was associated with the crass representation of ugly, sordid, and horrifying aspects of life; since this was what constituted the novelty and significance of realism, the word was applicable to ugly, gruesome images, regardless of whether they were intended as concrete description or as symbolic metaphors.
(Auerbach 1962: 153)

Paul Valéry's essay "Situation de Baudelaire" (Valéry O.C. I, 1957: 598-612 for the French version, and Valéry 1962 [1824]: 7-18 for an English version), an account which is as critical as it is authoritative, gives a very interesting perspective on Baudelaire's position in the French literary system, both as a translator and as a poet. Valéry describes how, arriving at a time when Romanticism was still very much in vogue, Baudelaire desperately needed to distinguish himself from the pantheon of talented poets who were then successful, and therefore had to do something absolutely different and new:

Au moment qu'il arrive à l'âge d'homme, le romantisme est à son apogée; une éblouissante génération est en possession de l'empire des Lettres: Lamartine, Hugo, Musset, Vigny sont les maîtres de l'instant. ... Il s'agit de se distinguer à tout prix d'un ensemble de grands poètes exceptionnellement réunis par quelque hasard, tous en pleine vigueur.
(Valéry 1957: 599-600)

For Valéry, Baudelaire's need to do something new, and the pivotal position in which the poet placed himself by achieving this difference, is what makes Baudelaire so important. Valéry does not diminish Baudelaire's poetry, but does seem to opine that it was the sheer novelty of Baudelaire's topics and forms, and the exhausted state of the literary genre of the day which combined to raise the

interest of Baudelaire's work as a poet. Valéry actually begins his essay by stating:

Je puis donc dire que s'il est, parmi nos poètes, des poètes plus grands et plus puissamment doués que Baudelaire, il n'en est point de plus *important*. (Valéry 1957: 598)

Baudelaire is seen, from a twentieth and twenty-first century perspective, as the turning point on which French literature swung from Romanticism into Symbolism. He is therefore considered to be the source of almost everything that followed his arrival in French poetry, from the work of Verlaine to that of Valéry, and from Rimbaud to Mallarmé:

Telle est la nouveauté de Baudelaire, son apport considérable à une poésie en train de se redéfinir comme le médium d'une expérience ayant sa source dans un *état* poétique, plutôt que comme l'habillage élégant d'un sentiment, d'une pensée philosophique; il préfigure les "déchiffrements" mallarméens et la recherche rimbaudienne de "l'âme monstrueuse." (Souiller & Troubetzkoy 1997: 383)

Baudelaire is indeed seen as a precursor of almost everything that came after him in French poetry, and his influence is considered inescapable. These introductory comments should also help to demonstrate that, as a poet who has been counted as a Romantic, a symbolist, a classical poet and a realist, Baudelaire is probably more efficiently described through those aspects of his work which set him apart from his fellow poets and authors, and these differences lie partly in the aesthetics he developed for himself, and partly in some of the topoï of his poetry. Some of these topoï, which inhabit Baudelaire's poetry, will now be discussed.

4.9.2. The Topoï of Baudelaire's Poetry: Three Baudelairean Characters

4.9.2.1. Introduction

As Souiller and Troubetzkoy's above use of the term "*état poétique*" suggests, Baudelaire's poems do not describe events or people in a direct manner, but manage to suggest certain atmospheres and states of mind which the reader is invited to enter or at least contemplate. These states of mind are actually a number of "poses" with which the poet himself can be identified (and, possibly because many of his poems are written in the first person, so he was). What set Baudelaire apart, then, was not just the novelty of his style, which for its unusual crudeness and bizarre combinations had the immediate effect of shocking his readers, but also, and especially, the topoï of his poems and prose.

Baudelaire placed the poet in the position of observer and chronicler of his own time and of aspects of his own life. His poetry thus presents, through sketches of a variety of characters, a picture of modern man and modern city life (more precisely, Parisian life) in the nineteenth century and of the spleen that this life provoked. If Baudelaire was associated with an eccentric and bohemian lifestyle, this also happened because of the identification that the public was bound to make between the poet and some of the characters in his poems. Souiller and Troubetzkoy explain that Baudelaire took up his position of observer of the modern city by featuring:

... toute une panoplie de personnages qui, du condamné au criminel et au suicidé, du dandy au chiffonnier, peuvent servir à définir les traits où le poète moderne se plaît à se reconnaître; ce ne sont pas des thèmes à proprement parler, mais des postures qu'il essaie l'une après l'autre, ces figures qui cristallisent l'effort pour parcourir, à partir du point de vue privilégié que constitue la sensibilité du poète, le divers de l'expérience humaine, fascinante et angoissante. (Souiller & Troubetzkoy 1997: 383)

These comments indicate clearly that in the case of Baudelaire's poetry, the identification of certain characters in the poems with the poet himself was intentional: Baudelaire created a number of characters in which he also saw his

mirror image and with which he hoped the public would identify him. This impression is confirmed by Robb:

La légende de Baudelaire, les masques qu'il adopte et qui déterminent encore la conception "populaire" du poète, se retrouvent ainsi dans sa poésie ... Le fait que Baudelaire a joué des rôles devant ses contemporains nous rappelle que la poésie n'était pas pour lui une tradition exclusivement littéraire. (Robb 1993: 120)

The importance of this aspect of Baudelaire's approach to poetry and writing is the following: if one accepts Robb's statement that the characters which Baudelaire created in his poetry were persona or masks which Baudelaire adopted, and with which he could be identified, then one must also examine and compare these characters with the image that Baudelaire created for Poe, since, as Baudelaire himself declared, Poe, at least the Poe whose image Baudelaire established in the biographical essay of 1852, also functioned as a mirror image of Baudelaire.²¹ This means that if Baudelaire felt a kinship with the *artistes maudits* of his own poetry and prose, then he may have also projected this persona onto the image he built for his source author. One can even take this identification a step further, when learning that the image that Baudelaire had of Poe was in a large part based on an identification that Baudelaire established between Poe and some of the characters in Poe's stories – an identification which, indeed, plagued French literary critiques of Poe for more than a century. But this would be running too far ahead. For now a discussion of some Baudelairean characters that feature in his poetry and which were "postures" in which Baudelaire himself can be clearly recognised should constitute a pertinent introduction to these issues.

²¹ This issue will be taken up in more detail in Chapter Five, where evidence will be given for the claim that the reputation and image that Poe's translator gave him did not correspond to the reality of Poe's life.

4.9.2.2. The Dandy

The first of these persona is the dandy, a type which featured both in Baudelaire's prose and in his verse. In his later years Baudelaire described the dandy as:

L'homme riche, oisif, et qui, même blasé, n'a pas d'autre occupation que de courir à la piste du bonheur; l'homme élevé dans le luxe et accoutumé dans sa jeunesse à l'obéissance des autres hommes, celui enfin qui n'a pas d'autre profession que l'élégance. (O.C. II 1976 [1863]: 711)

The dandy was not an exclusively Baudelairean character, and dandyism was a fashion that had actually already passed by the time Baudelaire got attached to it. But Baudelaire and some of his friends renewed the trend and helped to resuscitate the French interest in this type.

In the 1820s, the term dandy had been used mainly as a pejorative term, designating men whose sole occupation was the cultivation of elegance and manners, and who were considered superficial, egocentric and effeminate. The characteristics that distinguish a dandy from a regular aristocrat are described as follows:

Pour l'homme de cour de l'ancienne société, la dépense était une obligation qui faisait son rang mais c'était aussi ce rang qui le favorisait à se livrer à cette dépense. En revanche, le dandy est celui qui affirme la liberté de dépenser sans qu'aucun rang ni aucun titre ni même aucune fortune personnelle ne l'y autorise. C'est ce qui différencie le dandy du parvenu qui, par son luxe, fait valoir sa richesse et sa puissance financière. C'est aussi ce qui l'entraîne vers l'endettement lorsque s'épuisent les fonds dont il dispose. (Martin-Fugier 1990: 355)

The most famous of the French dandies was undoubtedly the Comte d'Orsay, whose relationship with his English mother-in-law (Lady Blessington) helped him maintain an extravagant lifestyle which Martin-Fugier sums up in three aspects: sexual immorality, membership of the aristocratic circles, and the use of fashion and the arts as a vehicle for maintaining one's success and status in high society (see Martin-Fugier 1990: 360-366).

Baudelaire's first reaction to dandies had been critical and denigrating, and in his 1846 *Choix de maximes consolantes sur l'amour* he described them in the following negative terms:

Bien qu'il faille être de son siècle, gardez-vous bien de singer l'illustre don Juan qui ne fut d'abord, selon Molière, qu'un rude coquin, bien stylé et affilié à l'amour, au crime et aux arguties; – puis est devenu, grâce à MM Alfred de Musset et Théophile Gautier, un flâneur *artistique*, courant après la perfection à travers les mauvais lieux, et finalement n'est plus qu'un vieux dandy éreinté de tous ses voyages, et le plus sot du monde auprès d'une honnête femme bien éprise de son mari.
(O.C. I 1975 [1846]: 551)

That both Musset and especially Gautier became good friends and sources of inspiration for Baudelaire, may partly explain the fact that he later changed his opinion of dandies. The revival of dandyism in the late 1840s was, however, not only Baudelaire's doing. Even though dandyism was often ridiculed from the 1840s onwards, certain artists and writers recognised their own bohemian existence in the life-style of the dandy, and Barbey d'Aurevilly gave a description of the sexual immorality of the dandy that was uncannily similar to Baudelaire's own experiences in love at that time:

... dans les années 1840, le dandy est avant tout un personnage qui a les moyens de parader confortablement sur le boulevard et qui, éventuellement, entretient une maîtresse exotique, brune, violente, qui lui mène la vie dure: Barbey d'Aurevilly lui-même a élaboré ce schéma au moment même qu'il publie *Brummell*, en écrivant *Une vieille maîtresse*, de 1845 à 1849. (Martin-Fugier 1990: 385)

Baudelaire himself exalted the tastes and lifestyle of the dandy in the previously quoted essay "Le peintre de la vie moderne" (O.C. II 1976 [1863]: 683-722), and established an image of the poet who is destined to live only for art, and who writes solely for art and beauty's sake, as Martin-Fugier confirms:

Comme chez Barbey d'Aurevilly écrivant *Brummell*, l'idée de dandysme lui [Baudelaire] servira aussi bien à sublimer la mesquinerie de la bohème dans laquelle il vit qu'à dégager théoriquement la pensée et la poésie de toute utilité ou fonction sociale. (Martin-Fugier 1990: 386)

The following extract from “Le peintre de la vie moderne” illustrates Baudelaire’s sympathy for dandyism, and the non-conformist part of the description clearly implies his own aspiration to be considered a dandy:

Que ces hommes se fassent nommer raffinés, incroyables, beaux, lions ou dandys, tous sont issus d’une même origine; tous participent du même caractère d’opposition et de révolte; tous sont des représentants de ce qu’il y a de meilleur dans l’orgueil humain, de ce besoin, trop rare chez ceux d’aujourd’hui, de combattre et de détruire la trivialité.
(O.C. II 1976 [1863]: 711)²²

As will become clear in later sections, Baudelaire erroneously attributed the traits of the aristocratic dandy to Poe, because he had found them represented in certain characters of Poe’s stories (e.g. Roderick Usher in “The Fall of the House of Usher”).

4.9.2.3. The *Poète Maudit*

Another favourite character of Baudelaire’s is the accursed poet, though again, the *poète maudit*, or to put it more generally, the unfortunate artist, was not a uniquely Baudelairean persona. In Baudelaire’s case, this theme was inspired not only by the precariousness of his own living conditions, but by the conditions in which many of his fellow artists lived, some of whom died in, and sometimes because of, extreme poverty. The suicide of his friend Gérard de Nerval (in 1852) greatly affected the poet, and earlier, in 1845, Baudelaire himself had attempted to commit suicide when his family appointed their notary, Mr. Ancelle, to oversee Baudelaire’s small fortune in his stead, after he had shown very convincing signs of squandering it. As Robb recounts, the suicide attempt which the artist

²² Martin-Fugier signals that in the 1830s the term “lion” was more or less synonymous for dandy, though for her the two were not really the same: “Un lion est une personne publique qui excite la curiosité publique, qui est recherché par un grand nombre de curieux” (Martin-Fugier 1990: 357), which does not necessarily imply the decadence and financial disasters associated with dandies.

committed when hearing about the limitations imposed upon his financial independence was shrouded in a dramatic anticipation of posthumous glory:

Surtout, en préparant sa tentative, Baudelaire fait revivre ce cliché, qui fournit alors la poésie lyrique un de ses thèmes favoris: le mythe du poète maudit ou, à cette époque, du poète "méconnu," "incompris." Dans ce drame, Baudelaire invente les rôles pour ceux qui l'entourent, même pour son conseil judiciaire. ... À Ancelle Baudelaire lègue sa maîtresse; à Banville ses manuscrits. En laissant ses papiers entre les mains de celui-ci pour qu'il les publie après sa mort, il s'associe de nouveau à la tradition de poésies "posthumes," réelles ou fictives, à laquelle appartient Joseph Delorme. (Robb 1993: 127) ²³

The *poète maudit*, whose death by suicide becomes a culmination of the misery that has filled his life, thus became another of the persona that peopled Baudelaire's poetry. Indeed, Robb confirms that the unknown artistic genius, poor and often besieged by sickness and misery was one of Baudelaire's favourite heroes:

L'artiste infortuné, dont la vie quotidienne est d'autant plus poignante qu'il est censé habiter des régions mythiques, occupe une place évidente dans la poésie de Baudelaire. (Robb 1993: 128)

Baudelaire also saw a *poète maudit* in Poe, and again this identification with one of his own persona was largely erroneous. Misery, poverty, bad health and a lack of recognition had certainly also plagued Poe and his family, but Baudelaire's biographical account exaggerated these aspects to a great extent. Indeed, in Chapter Five it will be shown that Baudelaire, ignoring contrary evidence, would take any opportunity to foreground the misery and grief that Poe had experienced, and would describe Poe's death as a kind of involuntary suicide, which Poe would have committed because he could no longer bear the lack of recognition and respect shown to him by the American public.

²³ Robb is here referring to Sainte-Beuve's 1829 "Vie, poésies et pensées de Joseph Delorme."

4.9.2.4. The *Bousingot*

The last of the characters in Baudelaire's poetry to be discussed, and which is of specific interest for the way in which Baudelaire approached Poe and his œuvre, is the *bousingot*. The term refers to the young men who, in the years after the "Trois Glorieuses" and the Revolution of 1830, supported republican and democratic ideas. The *bousingots* dressed in a specific way, described in the *Trésor de la langue française* as "souvent coiffé d'un chapeau de cuir bouilli et manifestant des opinions républicaines" (*Trésor* 4: 848). The name *bousingot* is derived from the hat in question, which was called a "bousin" (*ibid.*), and the clothes had a taste for the gothic to them, just as the literature that some of these late Romantics produced.

According to Milner and Pichois, *bousingotism* began with Hugo's "Petit Cénacle," a regular get-together of artists of all sorts, which included Théophile Gautier, Gérard de Nerval and the notorious dandy Alphonse Musset (Milner & Pichois 1996: 205). However, according to Paolo Tortonese the term *bousingot* does not apply to the members of the "Petit Cénacle" which, he says, did not consist of *bousingots* but of "jeunes-France," a type of person which Tortonese defines as "un révolutionnaire dans les mœurs, plus qu'en politique. ... Les "jeunes-France," y compris les membres du Petit Cénacle, veulent affirmer leur révolution dans le domaine de la littérature, des arts, du goût et de la sensibilité," says Tortonese (Tortonese 1995: 1545-1546). The amalgamation of the two terms continues, since the above interpretation of "jeune-France" is the meaning which Robb gives to *bousingotism* (Robb 1993: 133). In this study *bousingotism* is preferred over "jeunes-France" because Robb attributes this term specifically to Baudelaire, whereas Tortonese's concern is with Théophile Gautier. In any case, the literary movement to which both terms refer is probably best situated by Baudelaire himself in his essay on Pétrus Borel, one of the more spectacular members of the Petit Cénacle: ²⁴

²⁴Baudelaire wrote a preface to the edition of Pétrus Borel's *Rhapsodies*, and in 1861 wrote a chapter on him in his collection of reviews entitled "Réflexions sur quelques-uns de mes contemporains" (O.C. II 1976 [1861]: 153-156).

Cet esprit à la fois littéraire et républicain, à l'inverse de la passion démocratique et bourgeoise, qui nous a plus tard si cruellement opprimés, était agité à la fois par une haine aristocratique sans limites, sans restrictions, et d'une sympathie générale pour tout ce qui en art représentait l'excès dans la couleur et dans la forme, pour tout ce qui était à la fois intense, pessimiste et byronien; dilettantisme d'une nature singulière, et que peuvent seules expliquer les haïssables circonstances où était enfermée une jeunesse ennuyée et turbulente.
(O.C. II 1976 [1861]: 155)

Bousingotism and the "jeunes-France" movement are also associated with the "genre frénétique" (Milner & Pichois 1996: 128), and Rincé and Lecherchebonnier consider the genre (if such a heterogeneous collection of tastes and topics can be called a genre) as a late branch of Romanticism, also called "le romantisme noir" and contrast it with the older "historical" romanticism which they see represented in the works of Lamartine and Musset (Rincé & Lecherchebonnier 1986: 255). These authors describe *bousingotism* as follows:

Le romantisme noir, ou romantisme obscur, caractérise précisément ces "obscurs" du mouvement romantique, ces jeunes gens volontiers bohèmes, qui se disent "jeune France," "bousingots," ou "frénétiques."
(Rincé & Lecherchebonnier 1986: 255)

Rincé and Lecherchebonnier describe this generation of young artists as affected by "le goût des mystères, de l'occultisme, voire la nécromancie" (Rincé & Lecherchebonnier 1986: 260), and also attribute to them an interest in "illuminist" themes, inspired by the continued fascination in France for the writings of Swedenborg. Baudelaire's interest in Swedenborg is demonstrated, for instance, in a passage of his essay on Victor Hugo (O.C. II 1976 [1862]: 133) and his specific source of inspiration in these matters was Joseph de Maistre. As Pichois and Ziegler suggest, de Maistre's influence may also have had an effect on Baudelaire's approach to Poe's work:

Il est possible que la découverte de Joseph de Maistre ait influé sur l'image ou l'idée que Baudelaire se faisait de Poe qui, en 1852 sans cesser d'être un illuministe ("illuminé") devient et l'homme du guignon et le savant

ingénieur de contes. Le Savoyard [de Maistre] et l'Américain seront bientôt rapprochés: "De Maistre et Poe m'ont appris à raisonner."
(Pichois and Ziegler 1996: 296-297)²⁵

One should also remember the appearance of the French translation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, in 1821 (Milner & Pichois 1996: 127), the writings of Charles Nodier, and Honoré de Balzac, which stimulated an interest in what Milner and Pichois also call "les thèmes frénétiques": the guillotine, vampires and other types of corpses that come back to life, and also a more Mesmer-oriented interest in dreams, hypnosis, the unconscious and madness (Milner & Pichois 1996: 158-159). Moreover, France had discovered its taste for the fantastic through the translations of Hoffmann's tales, which had been realised in 1821 by Loève-Veimars (Milner & Pichois 1996: 151), a case of translation which will be further discussed in Chapters Five and Six.

Around 1846 Baudelaire thus became a belated *bousingot*, an attitude and conviction which he demonstrated in his poems and by his bizarre vestimentary habits. The following is Asselineau's description of Baudelaire's appearance around that time:

... et l'on vit alors apparaître sur le boulevard son fantastique habit noir, dont la coupe imposée au tailleur contredisait insolemment la mode, long et boutonné, évasé par en haut comme un cornet et terminé par deux pans étroits et pointus, en queue de sifflet, comme eût dit Pétrus Borel.
(quoted in Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 221)

Despite the socio-political connotations it generally carried, the *bousingotism* of Baudelaire had little to do with political ideas, and much more with an expression of frustration, a sort of rebellious spleen, and an affectation of bizarre and sinister tastes, which Baudelaire seems to have expressed with great verve:

A l'époque où il devient journaliste, Baudelaire recrée l'image que ces écrivains [*bousingots*] projetaient d'eux-mêmes au début des années 1830.
... Baudelaire s'habille selon sa légende: en tirant de sa poche un livre

²⁵ With the year 1852 Pichois and Ziegler are referring to and quoting from Baudelaire's 1852 biographical essay on Poe, "Edgar Allan Poe, sa vie et ses ouvrages."

“relié en peau humaine,” il annonce sa parenté avec ces romantiques qui, “d’après les figarotiers, mangent des enfants et font du grog dans des crânes.” (Robb 1993: 133)²⁶

The themes that Baudelaire himself may have derived from the writings of the *bousingots* are enumerated by Robb:

... ces lieux communs du bas-romantisme: la femme vampire, le corps décapité, le désir de la mort, bref, “le viol, le poison, le poignard, l’incendie” (*Au Lecteur*). Les titres, eux aussi, sont des hommages aux bousingots – *Spleen*, *l’Irrémédiable*, *L’Irréparable*, *Le Vampire*, *Les Litanies de Satan* – et ces rimes qui sont des *leitmotive* du recueil: *ténèbres*, *tombeau*, *remords*, *sombre*, *douleurs*, *nuits*, etc. (Robb 1993: 133)²⁷

For some critics and contemporaries of Baudelaire, the revival of these themes in Baudelaire’s poetry was not necessarily a laudable event, and prompted, for instance, the following response from a certain Lepage:

Et dire que sans ce misérable, le romantisme français serait probablement mort de n’avoir plus rien à dire. Mais Baudelaire lui a pris le pire: ses ténèbres, ses hiboux, ses pierres tombales, ses corbillards, ses gouges et ses diableries. (quoted in Robb 1993: 133-134)

Many of these *bousingot* themes appear in Poe’s stories, and it will become clear that Baudelaire had a strong preference for this aspect of Poe’s work. A great deal of ink has flowed over the influence of the themes and methods of Poe’s writing on Baudelaire, and one of the aspects that is most often highlighted is their common interest in the morbid and the sinister, which is very often seen as a question of the influence that Poe had on Baudelaire. The presence of *bousingotism* in Baudelaire’s life and literary interests *before* Baudelaire had a chance to read any of Poe’s tales is therefore relevant for the way in which Baudelaire would have approached these themes in Poe’s work. These themes were not new to Baudelaire; he had shown not simply an interest but a delectation for them, and when he encountered them in Poe’s work, he may therefore have

²⁶ Figarotier: someone who wrote for the *Figaro*, then a satirical weekly magazine.

²⁷ *Au lecteur*: Robb is here quoting from the poem “Au lecteur” (O.C. I 1975 [1855]: 5-6).

had a biased interpretation of them, and given them a different content from the one Poe was aiming at. In sum, it is important to remember that Baudelaire was fascinated by the obscure and the morbid long before he discovered his fetish author, and that this fascination did therefore not derive *from* Poe's influence, but may very well have worked to attract Baudelaire even more strongly to those aspects of Poe's writings that touched on these topoi.

To conclude this section on Baudelaire's favourite characters, it should be pointed out that the aim was not in any way to give an exhaustive discussion of the characters that appear in Baudelaire's poems and prose –the topic of women, for example, has been left out, a topic which could be relevant for a discussion of the translations of Poe's "Ligeia" and "Morella." However, the aim was to shed some light on a few of the more important persona that feature in Baudelaire's poetry, because the aristocratic dandy, the spleenful *poète maudit* and the turbulent, mystical and morbid *bousingot* are all characters with which Baudelaire most likely identified himself. What follows now is a description of the aesthetics in and by which they were brought to life.

4.9.3. Baudelaire's Aesthetics

4.9.3.1. Introduction: the "Correspondances"

A good way to begin a discussion on Baudelaire's aesthetics is to introduce the topic through what has been called his "Théorie des Correspondances." This "theory" is actually Baudelaire's personal exploitation of some of the occult and mystical elements of *bousingotism* that were mentioned above, and which announce the revived interest of the French in the supernatural and the fantastic. In his poem entitled "Correspondances" (O.C. I 1975 [1857]: 11-12), Baudelaire suggests that all things are connected and in hidden communication with each other, that what one observes is therefore analogous with what remains invisible

to us, and that one needs a particular state of consciousness in order to see or feel the connections between what is visible and what remains hidden.

Baudelaire's "Correspondances" are not only synchronic analogies which are established in the present and within the boundaries of the natural and physical world, but are also analogies formed on a more metaphysical level, with elements of the "other" world. Walter Benjamin, for instance, points to the sonnet "La vie antérieure," also featuring in *Spleen et idéal*, to support the claim that:

On ne trouve pas [ici] de correspondances simultanées, comme le cultiveront plus tard les symbolistes. Dans les correspondances, c'est le passé qui murmure, et leur expérience canonique a elle-même sa place dans une vie antérieure. (Benjamin 2000 [1940]: 373)

Indeed, Baudelaire's "Correspondances" are a result of his fascination for the supernatural, which he also tried to satisfy by artificial means. The nineteenth-century revival of the themes of Swedenborg combined in Baudelaire's mind with his Catholic beliefs to form an enthusiastic interest in the mystical and the supernatural, and as Marchal states, Baudelaire's "Correspondances" constitute an attempt to apply these mystical beliefs in his poetry, and should be seen as a part of a more general revival:

Il n'y a en effet rien d'original dans la philosophie baudelairienne des correspondances, simple variation sur un lieu commun du surnaturalisme romantique qui postule, au delà du monde sensible, un autre monde placé sous le signe de l'unité par la loi de l'universelle analogie. (Marchal 1993: 70)

The novelty of Baudelaire's writing was that the "Correspondances" became not just the topoï of some of his poems, but that he managed to integrate these analogies into the form of his poems as well, and this is what makes Baudelaire such a prominent precursor of symbolism:

Baudelaire invente ainsi, ou systématise pour le moins, une logique poétique à double fond, qui fait résonner les mots, et consoier ces résonances dans une harmonie seconde; il invente en somme, à travers la

logique des correspondances, ce que le symbolisme appellera plus tard l'art de la suggestion. (Marchal 1993: 70)

Having thus briefly explained the "Correspondances" as a point from which to begin a discussion of Baudelaire's aesthetics, it is now time to look at Baudelaire's treatment of form, the aspect of his work that has probably done the most to ensure its durability, and the theoretical foundations of which he derived to a large extent from Poe. In order to discuss the contents of this exchange, however, the story of Baudelaire's plagiarisation of "The Poetic Principle" (Poe 1984 [1850]: 71-94) must first be told.

4.9.3.2. The "Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe," "The Philosophy of Composition" and "The Poetic Principle"

In order to place the story of the plagiarism of the "The Poetic Principle" against the background of the influence which Poe had on Baudelaire's aesthetics, one can turn to Souiller and Troubetzkoy, who confirm that Baudelaire's opinions on poetry and art were greatly indebted, to say the least, to the ideas which Poe held on the subject:

Le recueil des *Fleurs du Mal* frappe par sa composition rigoureuse, témoin de la discipline que s'est imposée un poète soucieux de ne rien laisser au hasard et dont l'idéal aurait été, en allant encore plus loin que Poe ("La genèse d'un poème"), de dégager une mathématique de la création poétique pour parvenir strictement au résultat prévu.
(Souiller & Troubetzkoy 1997: 384)

"La genèse d'un poème" is Baudelaire's translation of "The Philosophy of Composition," (Poe 1984 [1846]: 13-25), which together with "The Rationale of Verse" (Poe 1984 [1848]: 26-70) and "The Poetic Principle" (Poe 1984 [1850]: 71-94) forms the trilogy of essays which Poe wrote on the rules of composition and aesthetics in poetry and art. Baudelaire translated the first, never touched the second, and, as will shortly be shown, plagiarised the third.

To begin with “The Philosophy of Composition”, this essay was, then, one of the sources which inspired Baudelaire’s aesthetics. The thread that runs through Poe’s essay is a step-by-step description of the creation of his famous poem “The Raven” and a general description of the process of poetic composition. The attentive reader will have remarked that Poe’s title, which was intended to cover *the whole* of literary creation (poetry and prose), was limited in Baudelaire’s translation to apply to *only one* particular poem. Moreover, from the text of “La genèse d’un poème” it becomes clear that the line between the ideas that belonged to Poe and those of Baudelaire was blurred by the translator. The text of Baudelaire’s “translation” of “The Philosophy of Composition” is constituted as follows:

“La genèse d’un poème” se compose d’un préambule dû à Baudelaire, de la traduction de “The Raven,” d’une phrase de liaison due à Baudelaire et reproduite ici à la suite du préambule, enfin de la traduction de “Philosophy of Composition” sous le titre “Méthode de composition.” (O.C. II 1976: 1247n)

Indeed, after a short introduction Baudelaire writes: “Maintenant, voyons la coulisse, l’atelier, le laboratoire, le mécanisme intérieur, selon qu’il vous plaira de qualifier la “Méthode de composition” (O.C. II 1976 [1857]: 354). As Pichois’ note shows, however, Baudelaire’s indication (which is also given in a footnote), that *only* the foreword and the phrase linking it to Poe’s text are his, did not feature in the publication of the essay in the *Revue française* (O.C. II 1976: 1247 note d. and 1248 note a.). It is thus especially the sentence linking Baudelaire’s foreword to Poe’s text which could still misguide readers, and in certain editions of Baudelaire’s work (e.g. Le Dantec 1951) it requires a real effort to distinguish between the words that belong to Poe and those belonging to Baudelaire. Considering that only the more recent contemporary editions have made it clear which parts of the text belong to whom, and remembering Berman’s remark that “Le traducteur a *tous les droits* dès lors qu’il joue franc jeu” (Berman 1995: 93), “La genèse d’un poème” could thus, at least from Berman’s contemporary perspective, *a priori* be excluded as a valid translation. However, if the reproduction of “The Philosophy of Composition” in “La genèse d’un poème”

already constitutes an act of rewriting that verges on plagiarism, this was certainly not the most far-reaching act of appropriation of which Baudelaire could be accused.

The most important source of Baudelaire's aesthetics was not Poe's "Philosophy of Composition," but Poe's "The Poetic Principle," which, as its title suggests, also contains detailed guidelines for the composition of a poem. However, even though the ideas expressed in "The Poetic Principle" constitute the basis of Baudelaire's own aesthetics, at least those which he expresses in theory, Baudelaire presented the translated contents of it twice without any clear indication that they were a paraphrase of Poe's words, forwarding them as if they were his own ideas, once in the "Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe," and once in an essay on Théophile Gautier.

At the date of the publication of the "Notes nouvelles," in 1857, Baudelaire had consulted two essays by Poe: "The Philosophy of Composition" and "The Poetic Principle," but even though Baudelaire had used the ideas expressed in both these essays in 1857, he never translated, nor even mentioned "The Poetic Principle" again after 1857, though great chunks of it feature in the "Notes nouvelles". Since he never mentioned his second source, "The Poetic Principle", again, the *extent* to which Baudelaire was indebted to Poe for his theoretical ideas on writing and art, was therefore not verifiable until much later. Looking at the original text of "The Poetic Principle" and comparing it with Baudelaire's "Notes nouvelles", one can now observe how a large part of the "Notes nouvelles" consists of an adaptation of Poe's "The Poetic Principle", of paraphrases and translated extracts from Poe's essay that feature without quotation marks. Surprisingly, this act of plagiarism is not that well-known an aspect of the Baudelaire-Poe relationship, and in recent times some scholars still refuse to apply that label to the "Notes nouvelles". In the face of such reluctance, it therefore seems useful to address the claim in a bit more detail than may seem necessary.

To begin with one testimony, one can refer to Claude Richard, one of the scholars who have studied the Baudelaire-Poe relationship in recent times:

On sait que l'essentiel des "Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe," l'article que Baudelaire donna en préface aux *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires* (1857), est une traduction non-avouée du "Principe Poétique."
(Richard 1989: 1463n)

But the most apt description of the plagiarism and of the motivations underlying the act comes from Paul Valéry. The following quotation is Valéry's explanation of what may have motivated Baudelaire's illicit borrowings, which is given in its entirety because it is applicable to the whole of the Baudelaire-Poe exchange:

L'homme ne peut qu'il ne s'approprie ce qui lui semble être si exactement *fait pour lui* qu'il le regarde malgré soi comme fait *par lui* ... Il tend irrésistiblement à s'emparer de ce qui convient étroitement à sa personne; et le langage même confond sous le nom de *bien* la notion de ce qui est adapté à quelqu'un et le satisfait entièrement avec celle de la propriété de ce quelqu'un. ... Or Baudelaire, quoique illuminé et possédé par l'étude du *Principe poétique*, – ou, bien plutôt, par cela même qu'il en était illuminé et possédé, – n'a pas inséré la traduction de cet essai dans les œuvres mêmes d'Edgar Poe; mais il en a introduit la partie la plus intéressante, à peine défigurée et les phrases interverties, dans la préface qu'il a placée en tête de sa traduction des *Histoires extraordinaires*. (Valéry 1957: 608)²⁸

The same opinion was expressed by Patterson, who dedicated a chapter entitled "Le plagiat des théories poétiques de Baudelaire" to the topic, in which he enquires:

Est-ce un plagiat? Le passage [in the "Notes nouvelles"] ne contient pas une seule pensée originale. Mais on répondra que Baudelaire ne prétendait pas que ces idées fussent à lui. ... Mais, d'autre part, pourquoi ferme-t-il les guillemets pour continuer sous la forme d'un commentaire original à la première personne? (Patterson 1923: 81)

Indeed, Baudelaire did announce his source, opened the quotation marks, gave one translated paragraph and then closed the quotation marks, though the next

²⁸ Valéry here para-textually misplaces the *Notes nouvelles*, which are not the preface to the *Histoires extraordinaires* (which have a preface entitled "Edgar Poe, sa vie et ses œuvres"), but to the *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires*.

paragraph is a continuation of his translation from Poe's essay. The reader is thus made to think that everything that follows are Baudelaire's own words.

Unfortunately for Baudelaire's reputation, Paul Valéry gave proof that this unavowed borrowing of Poe's ideas continued long after the publication of the "Notes nouvelles". Valéry shows that Baudelaire presented these plagiarised extracts for a second time in an essay on his friend Théophile Gautier, first published in 1859. In the 1859 essay, Baudelaire plagiarised the same source ("The Poetic Principle") by repeating exactly certain passages from his "Notes nouvelles," this time introducing them, however, with the following rather incredible comments:

Il est permis quelquefois, je présume, de *se citer soi-même*, surtout pour éviter de *se paraphraser*. Je répéterai donc: ...
(O.C. II 1976 [1859]: 112 – my italics)

Patterson replies ironically but also severely to this self-indulgence:

Evidemment il est permis de se citer soi-même autant qu'on le désire, mais il est défendu de reproduire les pensées d'un autre auteur en se les attribuant, lors même que ces idées seraient exprimées dans une autre langue. (Patterson 1923: 85)

So the ideas expressed in the "Notes nouvelles" are re-plagiarised in the 1859 essay on Théophile Gautier. In spite of all this evidence to the contrary – as will be shortly shown, a parallel reading of the texts in question immediately reveals that this really *is* a double act of plagiarism – certain scholars in more recent times still refuse to use the term. The comments made by Yves Le Dantec, the editor of the second to last Pléiade edition to include Poe's work in Baudelaire's *Œuvres Complètes*, speak for themselves:

Les "commentaires" dont Baudelaire accompagne ses citations du "Poetic Principle" ne sont souvent qu'une paraphrase, parfois une traduction littérale du texte de ce morceau. ... Mais qui oserait prononcer ici le nom de plagiat? Baudelaire, plein de son sujet, reproduit involontairement son auteur et le tient par sa propre substance. (Le Dantec 1951: 1142n)

One wonders how well Le Dantec studied the case: firstly Baudelaire does not indicate in a sufficient manner that he is quoting from the “Poetic Principle,” and secondly, what else is an unavowed paraphrase or translation but an act of plagiarism? Moreover, how can an author “involuntarily” reproduce the source he is rewriting literally? Surprisingly, even in the more recent Pléiade edition of 1976, edited by Claude Pichois, one does not find any indication whatsoever of the suspicions that have surrounded the “Notes nouvelles”, except for a small note which does not cover the whole essay but only one sentence, in which Pichois says:

Baudelaire s’inspire ici du “Poetic Principle.” Ce passage le montre en pleine possession et maîtrise de l’esthétique qu’il développera dans le *Salon de 1859*. (O.C. II 1976: 1241n)

And when the passage comes up in the essay on Gautier, Claude Pichois simply indicates, in a note, that “Baudelaire cite des extraits des “Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe,” préface des *Histoires extraordinaires* [sic], parues en 1857.”

The issue is more troubling still when one considers that the essay on Gautier earned Baudelaire a letter from no less than Victor Hugo, who finally offered his long-awaited congratulations to Baudelaire on his work and ideas, indicating that the essay proves that Baudelaire was not only a poet, but also a philosopher:

Votre article sur Théophile Gautier, Monsieur, est une de ces pages qui provoquent puissamment la pensée. Rare mérite, faire penser; don des seuls élus. Vous ne vous trompez pas en prévoyant quelque dissidence entre vous et moi. Je comprends toute votre philosophie (car, comme tout poète, vous contenez un philosophe); je fais plus que la comprendre, je l’admets; mais je garde la mienne. Je n’ai jamais dit: l’Art pour l’Art; j’ai toujours dit: l’Art pour le Progrès. Au fond c’est la même chose, et votre esprit est trop pénétrant pour ne pas le sentir. (O.C. II 1976: 1128-1129n)

The story of Baudelaire’s double plagiarism and of the reactions which his plagiarised ideas invited, is relevant for the thesis recently forwarded by Michel

Brix, who says that even though Baudelaire may have copied Poe's *words* in the "Notes nouvelles", he actually never made the ideas his own:

Poe, de même [as other "écrivains antagonistes" like Hugo or de Banville] fut aux yeux de l'auteur des *Fleurs du Mal*, à la fois esthétiquement et socialement, un repoussoir: Baudelaire aspirait à échapper, pour lui-même, à une poétique qu'il jugeait stérile et à un destin d'illuminé devenant l'objet de la risée de tous. (Brix 2003: 68)

Though Brix admits that in the "Notes nouvelles", "Baudelaire semble enfin se rapprocher de Poe" (Brix 2003: 68), he seems unaware of the fact that Baudelaire repeated the ideas expressed in the "Notes nouvelles", in his 1859 essay on Gautier. Brix's final conclusion, that as far as his own writings were concerned, Baudelaire should be considered more a disciple of Gautier than of Poe, is probably correct – as I indicated earlier, Gautier's *bousingotism* was shared by Baudelaire *before* he discovered Poe. Moreover, as Weightman indicates, "Art versus didacticism and meticulous care in composition were tenets of the Art-for-Art's-sake movement which predated Poe" (Weightman 1987: 205), and in France, Théophile Gautier was one of the leading figures of that movement. Still, as far as the importance of Baudelaire's direct and unavowed indebtedness to Poe is concerned, Brix's conclusions would benefit from a reading of the other texts where Baudelaire repeats Poe's ideas, and from a more meticulous comparison of the source texts and the essays which feature these copied passages.

It would thus seem that up until the study of Claude Richard, and even after that, there is a natural reluctance to accuse one of the most important French poets of an act which in contemporary terms can certainly be called plagiarism. The comments by which Valéry explains Baudelaire's act seem to have been fully absorbed by the French critics, in the sense that they considered (and many still do) these ideas to be so intrinsically Baudelaire's, and so *appropriately* his, that it did not really matter anymore whether he plagiarised them, or whether he conceived them himself. This type of reaction is unfortunately also common to the majority of the para-text concerning Baudelaire's translations (especially the writings of the previously mentioned Patrick Quinn and Lemonnier): the status of

the poet is so high that any evidence which might detract from his glory is either ignored or twisted in his favour.

Returning to Valéry's revelation of the second plagiarisation of "The Poetic Principle" in the 1859 essay on Gautier, one can only agree with Richard that Baudelaire had ample opportunity to re-attribute the ideas, which he had plucked from "The Poetic Principle", to their creator. That he never deigned to do so is all the more painful when one realizes that it was the essay on Gautier, which earned him the congratulatory letter from Victor Hugo. From this perspective, it could also be added that the fact that Baudelaire never did translate the full text of "The Poetic Principle" indicates that publishing a text by Poe which had become so intrinsically *his*, and so very similar to those he had written under his own name, would have made Baudelaire's position rather uncomfortable. In other words, Baudelaire probably realised that his act of plagiarism would be discovered if he translated Poe's original text, and that may very well be the reason why he never did translate "The Poetic Principle". Having now established the facts of the case, it is time to ask the question what the contents of these essays were, i.e. what were Baudelaire's (and Poe's) views on poetry and aesthetics?

4.9.3.3. Poetics and Aesthetics in the "Notes nouvelles"

The "Notes nouvelles" is not the only text in which Baudelaire discusses aesthetics. Baudelaire will repeat and expand what is said there in later critical essays, including the one on Théophile Gautier. The "Notes nouvelles" is the focus here, because it does present the gist of Baudelaire's aesthetics, while it also allows highlighting some of the passages that exemplify, by virtue of mere juxtaposition, the intellectual appropriation from "The Poetic Principle."

Limiting the discussion to those parts of the "Notes nouvelles" that deal with aesthetics, the reader is led straight to Part III, the first two parts consisting of more topoï-oriented comments on Poe's writings, some of which will be taken up

later in this study. Part III begins with a discussion on the human spiritual faculties, of which Baudelaire, following to a certain extent a correct interpretation of Poe's views on the matter, declares the imagination to be supreme.²⁹ After these comments Baudelaire sets out to repeat Poe's theory of effect, by which Poe declares that, before sitting down to write, authors and poets should decide which effect they want their text to have on their readers, and accordingly, which form (poetry or prose?) they should use in order to achieve that effect. In Poe's opinion, poetry should convey beauty, while prose should be used to convey the truth:

Now the object Truth, or the satisfaction of the intellect, and the object Passion, or the excitement of the heart, are, although attainable in poetry, far more readily attainable in prose. (Poe 1984 [1846]: 16)

Baudelaire repeats this in his "Notes nouvelles":

Car la vérité peut être souvent le but de la nouvelle, et le raisonnement, le meilleur outil pour la construction d'une nouvelle parfaite.
(Le Dantec 1951: 1057)

Correspondingly, "Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem," Poe stated in "The Philosophy of Composition". Beauty is an effect which the poet should labour to achieve, and not a quality that arises somehow spontaneously:

That pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, and the most pure is, I believe, found in the contemplation of the beautiful. When, indeed, men speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect. (Poe 1984 [1846]: 16)

The *effect* of the beautiful is, then, best achieved by poetry, and this is why Poe and Baudelaire think that poems should aim at Beauty, and nothing else.³⁰ The

²⁹ In Chapter Seven, the problems caused by Baudelaire's confusion of the terms *imagination* and *fancy* will be central to the analysis of the translation.

³⁰ Poe's vision of poetry, however, is also applicable to his aesthetics concerning other art forms, as he declares in "The Poetic Principle": "The Poetic Sentiment, of course, may develop itself in various modes – in Painting, in Sculpture, in Architecture, in the Dance – very especially in Music

poet should therefore create something beautiful simply for beauty's sake, and this corresponds to Baudelaire's motto: *L'Art pour l'art* – art for art's sake, or, art for the sake of beauty. The poem is the most apt form, because it is a *direct* way of achieving the *effect* of beauty:

I make Beauty the province of the poem, simply because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should spring as directly as possible from their causes – no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation in question is at least *most readily* attainable in the poem.
(Poe 1984 [1850]: 78)

The effect of Beauty is obtained, in Baudelaire's words, by applying "*L'Unité d'impression, la totalité d'effet*" (Le Dantec 1951 [1857]: 1057), or, as Poe had put it, through "that vital requisite in all works of Art, Unity" (Poe 1984 [1850]: 71) and unity is achieved through the totality of effect, which cannot be attained if the poem is too long. For Poe, a poem that cannot be read in one sitting cannot achieve the necessary totality of effect and unity of impression, and this idea is entirely absorbed by Baudelaire. In "The Poetic Principle" Poe indicates that, because of this limitation on length, an epic poem like the *Iliad* is a contradiction in terms:

It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun, is a nullity: – and this is precisely the fact. In regard to the *Iliad* we have, if not positive proof, at least very good reason for believing it intended as a series of lyrics; but, granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based in an imperfect sense of art.
(Poe 1984 [1850]: 72)

Baudelaire repeats this passage in a free translation in the "Notes nouvelles":

Le poème épique nous apparaît donc, esthétiquement parlant, comme un paradoxe. Il est possible que les anciens aient produit des poèmes lyriques, reliés postérieurement par les compilateurs en poèmes épiques, mais toute *intention épique* résulte évidemment d'un sens imparfait de l'art. (Le Dantec 1951 [1857]: 1059)

– and very peculiarly and with a wide field, in the composition of the Landscape Garden" (Poe 1984:[1850]: 77).

The reader will have noticed that Baudelaire avoided mentioning the *Iliad* by name. Still, the paragraph is a pretty obvious reproduction of Poe's words and ideas.

Another important aspect of Poe's opinions on poetry taken up entirely by Baudelaire is the idea that art should never have a didactic purpose. Poetry should not try to teach anything, but simply serve the expression and the experience of Beauty:

I allude to the heresy of *The Didactic*. It has been assumed, tacitly and avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of Poetry is Truth. ... Would we but permit ourselves to look into our own souls we should immediately discover that under the sun there neither exists nor *can* exist any work more thoroughly dignified, more supremely noble, than this very poem, this poem *per se*, this poem which is a poem and nothing more, this poem written solely for the poem's sake. (Poe 1984 [1850]: 73)

Baudelaire repeats this in the "Notes nouvelles" (without quotation marks), and the paragraph also features in the essay on Gautier (O.C. II 1976 [1859]: 112):

... je veux parler de l'hérésie de l'enseignement ... La poésie, pour peu qu'on veuille descendre en soi-même, interroger son âme, rappeler des souvenirs d'enthousiasme, n'a pas d'autre but qu'elle-même; elle ne peut en avoir d'autre, et aucun poème ne sera si grand, si noble, si véritablement digne du nom de poème, que celui qui aura été écrit uniquement pour le plaisir d'écrire un poème.
(Le Dantec 1951 [1857]: 1059)

If poems should not aim to teach anything, then what effect should they have on the reader's mind? Within the dynamics of Beauty as an effect, the task of the poet becomes an attempt to achieve this effect in order to elevate the souls of his readers. Indeed, Poe indicates that he thinks poetry should serve this purpose:

It has been my purpose to suggest that, while this [poetic] principle itself is strictly and simply the Human Aspiration for Supernal Beauty, the manifestation of the Principle is always found in *an elevating excitement of the soul*, quite independent of that passion which is the intoxication of the Heart or of that truth which is the satisfaction of Reason.
(Poe 1984 [1850]: 92-93)

Baudelaire takes over this guideline, declaring in the “Notes nouvelles” (again without quotation marks), and repeating Poe's words in his essay on Gautier:

Ainsi, le principe de la poésie est, strictement et simplement, l'aspiration humaine vers une beauté supérieure, et la manifestation de ce principe est dans un enthousiasme, une excitation de l'âme, – enthousiasme tout à fait indépendant de la passion qui est l'ivresse du cœur, et de la vérité qui est la pâture de la raison.

(Le Dantec 1951 [1857]: 1060 and O.C. II 1976 [1859]: 114)

Further aspects that were taken up in the “Notes nouvelles” and which came both from “The Philosophy of Composition” and “The Poetic Principle” apply more specifically to poetry: the refrain, the tone (of which Poe declares that “Melancholy is (thus) the most legitimate of all the poetical tones” (Poe 1984 [1846]: 17), and the rhythm and the “topic” of a poem. Here Poe chooses “the death of a beautiful woman” which is “unquestionably the most poetical topic in the world” (Poe 1984 [1846]: 19). As has been shown, this link between Beauty and death was exploited by Baudelaire, who absorbed this element in his “Correspondances,” and one finds its echoes throughout Baudelaire's work. In one of the parts of the “Notes nouvelles” that were also repeated in the study on Théophile Gautier, Baudelaire explains the presence of death and the afterworld in his “Correspondances” as follows:

C'est cet admirable, cet immortel instinct du beau qui nous fait considérer la Terre et ses spectacles comme un aperçu, comme une *correspondance* du Ciel. La soif insatiable de tout ce qui est au delà, et que révèle la vie, est la preuve la plus vivante de notre immortalité. C'est à la fois par la poésie et à travers la poésie, par et à travers la musique, que l'âme entrevoit les splendeurs situées derrière le tombeau, et, quand un poème exquis amène les larmes au bord des yeux, ces larmes ne sont pas la preuve d'un excès de jouissance, elles sont bien plutôt le témoignage d'une mélancolie irritée, d'une postulation des nerfs, d'une nature exilée dans l'imparfait et qui voudrait s'emparer immédiatement, sur cette terre même, d'un paradis révélé.

(O.C. II 1976 [1859]: 113 and Le Dantec 1951 [1857]: 1060)

It will come as no surprise that most of this quotation corresponds exactly to Poe's explanation in "The Poetic Principle", and for brevity's sake the English passage is not quoted here, but the reader is referred to Poe 1984 [1850]: 76-77. The task of the poet, for Poe and Baudelaire, is thus to elevate the soul of the reader, and to give him a glimpse, through the words of the poem, of supernatural Beauty, "les splendeurs situées derrière le tombeau." This was the foundation of Baudelaire's aesthetics, and is also what underlies his understanding of the motto, "l'Art pour l'art." The idea as it is expressed above, however, came from Poe, and euphemistically speaking, Baudelaire applied less than minimal effort in making the extent of his indebtedness to Poe verifiable for the French public.

All in all, what does Baudelaire's treatment of Poe's texts say about his position as a writer and rewriter? Poe's ideas allowed Baudelaire to find a different aesthetics than the one which the Romantics had used up, and as Valéry indicated, it was important for Baudelaire to distinguish himself from the aesthetics of poets like Lamartine and Musset, and Poe was thus instrumental in that distinction. Moreover, it has been shown that Baudelaire had no qualms whatsoever in appropriating the novel ideas of a foreign author for this purpose, and the appropriation went largely unacknowledged. It was also demonstrated that until the late 1850s Baudelaire was better known as a translator than as a poet, and his position as literary figure was therefore rather fragile, which can explain why he wished to hide his debt to Poe to a great extent. In any case, the plagiarism of "The Poetic Principle" shows an attitude towards Poe's intellectual property that is, in the terms used in the first chapter, unidirectionally anthropophagous. Baudelaire "consumed" Poe, but, at least as far as Poe's ideas on aesthetics are concerned, did not reproduce them in any way that could have, in turn, strengthened his source author's status. Quite the contrary. As will become clear in the course of the next chapter, Baudelaire managed to further conceal Poe's genius in a number of ways.

4.10. Conclusions and Recapitulation

From the investigations into Baudelaire's position as a language user, one is able to conclude a number of relevant facts, some of which had not been clearly stated before. Firstly, Baudelaire had an intermediate command of English when he discovered Poe, and he improved his English skills in the period between 1848 (the time of the publication of "Révélation magnétique", his first translation) and 1856, the year when the first collection of translations, the *Histoires extraordinaires*, was published. Baudelaire was never a bilingual speaker of English, and, as the errors pointed out in the translations show, his initial lack of linguistic competence may not have been wholly remedied by this four-year period of work and study. Baudelaire's linguistic deficiency should therefore be taken into account when there is no other explanation for certain errors in the translations. Furthermore, English was the only language in which Baudelaire worked as a translator, and he also translated a few texts by other authors, mainly poems, one of which he published under his own name. This sums up his position as a language user (Berman's "position langagière").

As far as Baudelaire's aesthetics and his ideas on writings were concerned, i.e. what Berman called his "position scriptuaire", this chapter was focused on those aspects of Baudelaire's work which were most relevant for the relationship that exists between his views on writing and Poe's, and which also eloquently illustrate how Baudelaire approached his author. In the discussion of the topoi of Baudelaire's poetry and prose, three Baudelairean characters which are deemed significant for this study were introduced, because they were characters with whom Baudelaire identified: the point being that if Baudelaire also identified himself with Poe, or, better said, with the image that he built for Poe, he may very well have projected traits of his own characters onto that image. The first of the Baudelairean "postures" that were discussed was the dandy, a fashionable French persona whose aristocratic air Baudelaire wrongly attributed to Poe, as will be shown in the next chapter. Secondly, the circumstances of his life also provided Baudelaire with a self-image of the *poète maudit*, again a character that offered

rich ground to be exploited by a poet who was striving to be recognised for his eccentricity. Thirdly, the *bousingot* was the character through which Baudelaire became a member of a group of writers who exalted the dark side of Romanticism, both in their life-style and in their choice of themes. The early influence of *bousingotism* on Baudelaire is significant for this study, because it helps to establish the fact that Baudelaire did not derive his predilection for the morbid from Edgar Allan Poe, but that, in a reverse mode, Baudelaire may have shown a preference for these themes which biased his reading of Poe.

In discussing Baudelaire's aesthetics, an account of the plagiarisation of one of Poe's seminal essays on the topic of poetics and aesthetics also helps to illuminate the approach which Baudelaire adopted to Poe's work in general. By presenting the ideas which became their common aesthetics, it was established that Baudelaire's way of looking at art, at least the theoretical expression of these ideas, was greatly indebted to Poe, if not copied downright from his essays. The main guidelines which Baudelaire inherited from Poe regarding the purpose of a poem and of art, which lead to Baudelaire's adherence to the motto "*l'Art pour l'art*", are identical to Poe's view that art serves to express and experience Beauty, and to elevate the mind of the reader. The view that genre and length should be in accordance with the effect the author wants to achieve, and that a poem should therefore be as short as possible, were also repeated twice by Baudelaire as his own ideas. Lastly, Poe's "heresy of the didactic" was also appropriated by Baudelaire, who disagreed with Hugo on this issue, and arrogated to himself Poe's view that poetry is not the domain of politics or social issues, but the sole domain of Beauty and the contemplation of Beauty.

In the next chapter, a closer look will be taken at how Baudelaire approached his source author and the source texts as a rewriter. Still, the reader now already has a strong foretaste of the way in which Baudelaire allowed himself to steer and control Poe's literary destiny in France. Baudelaire plagiarised Poe's ideas on writing and aesthetics, and though the customs of the nineteenth century were a lot more flexible in these matters, the question is relevant for the light it sheds on

the specific project which Baudelaire had, not only for the translation of Poe's short fiction, but for the whole process of *translatio* of the American author's œuvre into French literature, and which seems to be, fundamentally, a project of personal appropriation.

Chapter Five: The Translator's Stance, Project and Horizon

5.1. Introduction

For the second part of what Berman calls the “*théorie du sujet traduisant*,” the following issues remain for discussion: the translator's stance (“*position traductive*”), i.e. his attitude and views on translation in general; the translator's project (“*project de traduction*”), which consists of Baudelaire's particular aims for the *translatio* of Poe's short fiction and the translator's horizon (“*horizon du traducteur*”), which has been divided into two parts, as consisting of a literary horizon, and of what is called the “*translational*” horizon. The former refers to the state of the target literature into which Poe's stories were introduced and with which they could “interact” in an intertextual sense, whereas the latter refers to the reigning views regarding translation in Baudelaire's time. For clarity's sake the translational horizon will be deferred to Chapter Six, where it will be completed with a concise comparative discussion of the other translations of Poe's fiction that came out during or before Baudelaire was publishing his own.

The reason why it is important to determine the translator's stance, project and horizon has already been explained in Chapter Three: in Translation Criticism any para-textual information on the circumstances in which the translation came about is relevant and should be brought to bear on the analyses of the translations. In other words, and using a purely hypothetical example, if Baudelaire had written somewhere that non-classical foreign authors need to be embellished in translation, this would have been part of his stance as a translator. This aspect of his stance could then be explained both by factors in the “*translational horizon*” (i.e. the reigning translation theory and practice), but could also be associated with Baudelaire's own poetics, and, most importantly, could be retraced in the translations.

Establishing the remaining part of the “theory” of Baudelaire as “translating subject” is therefore an inevitable stage in a study which claims to present a textual, meta-textual and para-textual examination of the whole process of *translatio*. On the other hand, it also allows the translation critic to give a certain direction to his inquiries when the stage of analysing and comparing the translations comes along, and to tackle these with a sound basis of historical and biographical data. Moreover, presenting a full picture of the translator, his attitudes to translation and the literary and translational horizon in which he works, automatically allows one to introduce matters of poetics and patronage – though this terminology seems to cover too much to be applied in this chapter – and to not only evaluate but also explain the translator’s decisions (as indicated in Chapter Two). Lastly the circumstances of the “birth” of Baudelaire’s translations constitute information that will be necessary to decide whether the translations *as a whole* (i.e. including their para-text) correspond to what Berman set down as characteristically “great” translations.

5.2. Baudelaire's Stance in Translation

Baudelaire had certain strong views regarding Poe’s work, but, excepting one general comment which specifically concerns the translation of Poe’s short fiction, and which will be discussed as part of his translation *project* (cf. *infra*), and a few *ad hoc* explanations that feature in footnotes, these views did not concern translation proper and were not fitted into a larger logic regarding translation and translation strategies. As will be shown in Chapter Six, French translation theory, both from the eighteenth and the nineteenth century, was extant in a number of treatises and prefaces, but these texts were usually written either by grammarians or by authors whose literary reputation was important enough to interest the nineteenth-century reader in their opinions on translation. In the preceding chapter it was shown that Baudelaire’s literary fame was not yet established when he began publishing his translations, and this may explain why he never argued on translation in general, or even on the specific project of translating Poe. Moreover, as was also pointed out in the preceding chapter, in the

mid eighteen-fifties Baudelaire was still a neophyte translator, which would naturally be the most obvious explanation for his not having elaborated a stance in translation in general.

From the para-text which Baudelaire did write, and which will be further discussed in the present chapter, it becomes very clear that it was not so much the translation process or product, as the persona of “his” author which interested Baudelaire. The discussion on the double plagiarism of Poe’s “The Poetic Principle” in the previous chapter already revealed how far Baudelaire went in appropriating Poe’s writings, and the reader now also knows that the translator identified very strongly, both on a personal and on a literary level, with the source author. As far as his ideas on the activity of translation were concerned, Baudelaire’s friends and acquaintances give accounts of his scrupulousness in researching his translations – praise which will be examined further in Chapter Six, and the value of which will also become more clear once the translations themselves are analysed. Still, though he is described as a scrupulous translator, the activity of translating was not considered by Baudelaire as worthy as the activity of writing poetry or criticism, and in the previous chapter it was already pointed out that Baudelaire did not consider translation more than a “moyen paresseux de battre monnaie” (Correspondances II 1973 [1865]: 467).

If, besides these comments, one is to read Baudelaire’s stance implicitly, from his treatment of Poe’s texts and from the texts (prefaces) with which he accompanied his translations, one can begin by stating that for Baudelaire, a translator should first and foremost possess a specific and intimate bond with the source author, and that the two should have, at least on a personal level, a series of common characteristics. Though it will become clear in Chapter Six that the procedure of writing a “critical” essay on the author one was translating was (still) fashionable literary practice in Baudelaire’s time, it is the highly (auto)biographical content of the para-text, and the highly personal treatment of Poe’s life and times by Baudelaire, which makes this side of Baudelaire’s stance idiosyncratic, even for his days. Baudelaire thus shows a stance in translation that results in a sort of

“tutorship,” which, as will be shown in Chapter Six, was not an exceptional relationship for a translator to have with his source author in Baudelaire’s time.

Any other information regarding Baudelaire’s stance will have to be deduced both from what he wrote about Poe and his work, and from the translation strategies he actually deployed in his translations, and the readings which these translations produce. The rest of this chapter will help to further establish, from what he may have said about it in the para-text surrounding the translations, Baudelaire’s particular project for the translations of Poe, and the state of the target literature into which they were introduced.

5.3. Baudelaire’s Project for the Translation of Poe’s Short Fiction

5.3.1. Baudelaire as Poe’s Loève-Veimars

In spite of not having any noted views on translation in general, Baudelaire did have a clear *project* for the translations of Poe’s short fiction. This means that both on a textual and a meta-textual level, Baudelaire had particular aims and intentions for the way in which the French public was to receive and perceive these texts and their author. That Baudelaire was particularly attached to controlling the fate of “his” author becomes immediately clear when one observes how, as soon as he discovers Poe, the desire emerges to establish for himself some sort of exclusive guardianship for the American author. His model in this is Alphonse Loève-Veimars, who had introduced and translated the tales of Hoffmann in France some fifteen years earlier. In 1858 Baudelaire asks Sainte Beuve the following question:

On a tant parlé de Loève-Veimars, et du service qu’il avait rendu à la littérature française! Ne trouverai-je donc pas un brave qui en dira autant de moi ? (Correspondances I 1973 [1858]: 505)

Ironically, it is now known to the reader that Loève-Veimars began not by translating, but by plagiarising a tale by Hoffmann, as Lemonnier indicates with a testimony from Maxime Du Camp:

N'était-ce point un scandale qui, quelque quinze ans auparavant [in 1835], avait révélé au public français le nom d'Hoffmann? Loève-Veimars, alors inconnu, "publia le *Violon de Crémone* et le signa de son nom. Ce fut un succès. Il jouissait de son triomphe, lorsqu'un journaliste, qui connaissait les *Contes d'Hoffmann*, dévoila la supercherie et restitua le *Violon de Crémone* à son véritable propriétaire. Loève-Veimars ne se déconcerta pas pour si peu, et se contenta de publier une traduction des *Contes Fantastiques* qu'il restitua à Hoffmann." (Lemonnier 1928: 30)

1858 may have been too late for Baudelaire to be aware of the plagiarism scandal attached to Loève-Veimars' name. In any case, nowadays Loève-Veimars' name is remembered for his translations, which did indeed help to widely spread Hoffmann's fame in France. The importance of Baudelaire's wish to be Poe's Loève-Veimars as expressed above is that it shows that Baudelaire had, from the beginning, a clear intention of enriching the target literary system with Poe's work, and of being associated with the destiny of that work as closely as possible. In that, as Chapter Six will reveal, he was no different from other "traducteurs-tuteurs" who had worked before him. What is important to remember, then, is that Baudelaire's project for the translations thus corresponded, from the beginning, to a personal interest, as Baudelaire considered translation as a means to improve his own status within the French literary field.

5.3.2. A Strong Feeling of Recognition

A recurring point that is made about Baudelaire's discovery of Poe is that from the very first story Baudelaire read, he felt a powerful feeling of recognition with Poe, which resulted in a strong tendency to identify his life with Poe's. An example of this is found in a letter to his mother, written in 1852 after having carried out substantial work on the translations, and at the time of the publication of Baudelaire's first biographical essay on Poe:

J'ai trouvé un auteur américain qui a excité en moi une incroyable sympathie, et j'ai écrit deux articles sur sa vie et ses ouvrages.
(Correspondances I 1973 [1852]: 191)

Testimonies abound of how enthusiastic Baudelaire was about the new American author, how he would harangue any American he could find to get manuscripts and information on Poe's person, how for the translation of *The Adventures of Arthur Gordon Pym* he scoured bars in Paris looking for English-speaking sailors to explain certain maritime terms to him, etc. The details of these eulogistic descriptions of Baudelaire's enthusiasm, which often, as in the case of Léon Lemonnier or Patrick Quinn (Lemonnier 1828, Quinn 1957), overflow into subjective accounts of the spiritual bonds that must have existed between the two authors, will be left aside.³¹

Baudelaire's feeling of recognition was based both on the biographical information he obtained on Poe, and on his impressions from Poe's writings. That Baudelaire (erroneously, as will shortly become clear) thought that his own life and personality had a lot in common with Poe's can again be seen in the following extract from a letter in which he admits his own alcohol abuse, and suggests that this is why he has managed to understand Poe so well:

Mais cette abominable existence et cette eau-de-vie, – que je vais supprimer – m'ont gâté l'estomac pour quelques mois, et de plus j'ai des maux de nerfs insupportables, – exactement comme les femmes. ... Comprends-tu maintenant, pourquoi, au milieu de l'affreuse solitude qui m'environne, j'ai si bien compris le génie d'Edgar Poe, et pourquoi j'ai si bien écrit son abominable vie? (Correspondances I 1973 [1853]: 214)

As Baudelaire indicated years later in another letter, the immediate recognition also came about because of the impressions Poe's work had made on him.

³¹ For an idea of the tone of these commentaries, an example from Lemonnier. After quoting Baudelaire's statement "Ne trouverai-je donc pas un brave qui en dira autant de moi?" (cf. supra), Lemonnier answers the long defunct Baudelaire: "Ce brave, le voici, ô Maître" (Lemonnier 1962: 3), thus designating himself as the good man who will continue to spread Baudelaire's glory and merit as Poe's guardian and translator. In Chapter Six, the way in which Lemonnier's highly subjective position affected his opinions on the quality of the Baudelaire translations, especially when he compared them with parallel translations, will be further confirmed.

Baudelaire even claimed to have thought or dreamt parts of Poe's texts before reading them as written by Poe:

Savez-vous pourquoi j'ai si patiemment traduit Poe? Parce qu'il me ressemblait. La première fois que j'ai ouvert un livre de lui, j'ai vu avec épouvante et ravissement, non seulement des sujets rêvés par moi, mais des phrases, pensées par moi et imitées par lui vingt ans auparavant.
(quoted in Lemonnier 1928: 109)

Incidentally, this piece of para-text reveals quite a bit more than what it intended, since in the original letter, Baudelaire did not write "imitées" but "écrites" (Correspondances II 1973 [1864]: 186), which indicates a significant addition by Lemonnier, who seems to want to attribute the originality of Poe's ideas to Baudelaire – thus further demonstrating the subjectivity of his position. In any case, it is clear that, from the beginning, Baudelaire was using Poe's material to say something about himself. This underlying intention is also clear from the following lines taken from his preface to a 1864 edition of his translations:

Pourquoi n'avouerai-je pas que ce qui a soutenu ma volonté, c'était le plaisir de leur présenter un homme qui me ressemblait un peu, par quelques points, c'est-à-dire une partie de moi-même?
(Le Dantec 1951 [1864]: 1063)

Before going further into the intricacies of Baudelaire's guardianship of Poe, it is probably useful to point out that the force of the identification which Baudelaire established between himself and Poe increased over time, not only in Baudelaire's but also in the French public's mind, a progression which viewed with hindsight resembles a self-fulfilling prophecy. In any case, at the end of his life, during the prolonged agony of a syphilis-death, Baudelaire admitted in his diary to the following superstitious practices:

Faire tous les soirs ma prière à Dieu, réservoir de toute force et de toute justice, à mon père, à Mariette [la servante de grand cœur] et à Poe, comme intercesseurs; les prier de me communiquer la force nécessaire pour accomplir tous mes devoirs ...
(quoted in Le Dantec 1951: 1137n)

The point from which Baudelaire set out to translate Poe's short fiction was thus far from being objective or neutral, and both his stance and project were affected by the feeling of recognition just described. This biased attitude is one of the many elements which make Baudelaire's stance as a translator such a complex thing to define. Moreover, it will soon become clear that Baudelaire admired sides of Poe which he had invented himself.

5.3.3. Baudelaire's Explicit Project

However strong his desire to be Poe's exclusive guardian may have been, this did not entail that Baudelaire had spelled out any specific convictions or ideas on how to translate his protégé's work. It has already been stated that Baudelaire never wrote anything in general on translation, and with regards to the translations of Poe's short fiction in particular, there are again very few comments on translational approaches or techniques. One important exception, however, is what Baudelaire said in the early preface to his first translation of "Mesmeric Revelation":

Il faut surtout s'attacher à suivre le texte littéral; certaines choses seraient devenues bien autrement obscures si j'avais voulu paraphraser mon auteur au lieu de me tenir servilement attaché à la lettre. J'ai préféré faire du français pénible et parfois baroque et donner dans toute sa vérité la technie philosophique d'Edgar Poe. (Le Dantec 1951 [1848]: 1078) ³²

Besides this paragraph, the rest of Baudelaire's comments regarding his translations is limited to notes that do give glimpses of Baudelaire's attitude as a translator. These notes will be referred to as para-text in the analyses of the stories which they accompany. As the reader's attention will now be drawn on the two essays by which Baudelaire introduced Poe in France, the following lines from the first of these essays can already give an initial indication of the focus of Baudelaire's attention in his project for the translation of Poe's work:

³² "Technie" does not exist in French, and Baudelaire is here using this Greek word in its meaning of "τέχνη," i.e. "art, habileté à faire quelque chose" (Bailly 1950: 1923).

Des ouvrages de ce singulier génie, j'ai peu de chose à dire; le public fera voir ce qu'il en pense. (Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1045)

What will indeed transpire from the following sections is that in Baudelaire's writings which introduce Poe's life and works, "son intérêt pour l'œuvre est secondaire" (Richard 1989: 12) – a statement of which the validity with regards to the translations will be further investigated in Chapters Seven and Eight. Most of the para-textual project, in any case, was centred around Poe's life and the supposed lack of recognition he suffered in America – aspects which, eventually, brought the focus of the para-text back to Baudelaire, as "tutor" and saviour of Poe's literary fame.

5.3.4. The Discovery of Poe in France

5.3.4.1. Introduction

The desire to be Poe's guardian in France had such a strong hold on Baudelaire that everyone, including Baudelaire himself, would soon forget that it was not Baudelaire who first discussed or translated Poe in France. As A.H. Quinn's three-page discussion of Poe's first appearances in France shows, neither the first important translations nor the first piece of genuine criticism on Poe came from Baudelaire:

Poe's recognition in France began in 1845, when in the November issue of the *Revue Britannique* appeared a translation of "The Gold Bug" entitled "Le Scarabée d'Or," and signed "A.B." Alphonse Borghers was, therefore, the first translator of Poe into French. (Quinn 1972: 516)

Baudelaire is actually the one to have gone to great lengths to designate himself *post factum* as exclusive discoverer of Poe. In a letter to Eugène Pellatan, for instance, he wrote:

C'est moi qui ai mis en branle la réputation d'Edgar Poe à Paris; ce qu'il y a de plaisant, c'est que d'autres, émus par mes article biographiques et critiques, et par mes traductions se sont occupés de lui, mais que personne – excepté vous – n'a daigné citer mon nom.
(Correspondances I 1973 [1854]: 273)

Actually, the authors to first promote Poe's work in France had already been discussing and translating Poe long before Baudelaire got involved, and long before Baudelaire wrote his biographical essay on Poe. These critics and translators, among whom figured E.D. Forgues, whose essay is up for discussion in the following section, were collaborators of the *Revue britannique*, a magazine that was described on its own front page as a "Recueil international", containing a "choix d'articles extraits des meilleurs écrits périodiques de la Grande-Bretagne et d'Amérique, complété par des articles originaux" (quoted in Lemonnier 1928: 12): in other words, a publishing and reading ground for anglophiles. Lemonnier explains the circumstances of the first translation of a Poe story to appear in the *Revue britannique*:

... en novembre 1845, elle donna une version française du "Scarabée d'Or," dont le traducteur était un certain Borghers. Le morceau était suivi d'une courte note du directeur, Amédée Pichot, qui avait évidemment pris l'initiative de la circonstance. C'est à lui, en somme, que revient l'honneur d'avoir introduit Edgar Poe en France. (Lemonnier 1828: 13)

Neither Lemonnier nor A.H. Quinn (cf. supra) were aware at the time of writing their comments that Alphonse Borghers was the pseudonym of Amédée Pichot, who was known for his translations of the works of Byron. Moreover, Pichot also preceded Baudelaire in publishing, three years before the first publication of the *Histoires extraordinaires*, the first collection of translations, again under the same pseudonym. The details of these translations, and the analysis of one of them, will be taken up in Chapter Eight, where Pichot's translation of "The Gold Bug" will be compared to Baudelaire's. The reviews of Poe's work that were produced by these French Poe-pioneers, however, are relevant now, as they are necessary to better assess and evaluate Baudelaire's own para-text on Poe.

5.3.4.2. Emile Daurand Forgues' Early Essay

The critical quality of Forgues' 1846 essay "Les contes d'Edgar Allan Poe" stands out in comparison with the first biographical essay that Baudelaire was to produce six years later, and Forgues' essay will therefore briefly be discussed here, as a background against which Baudelaire's subsequent writings on Poe can be drawn up. Emile D. Forgues, who used the pseudonym "Old Nick," was the first to produce a genuine critical discussion of Poe's work in France. The circumstances of the publication of this essay, and of Forgues' first translations of Poe, were also remarkable:

On October 12, 1846, E.D. Forgues published in *Le Commerce* a version of "The Murders" under the title of "Une Sanglante Enigme," without credit to Poe. Forgues had accused a rival paper, *La Presse*, of plagiarism and this journal seized the occasion to accuse Forgues of having copied his story from *La Quotidienne*. In his reply, he acknowledged that he had taken the story from Poe. *La Presse* refused to print the reply and he sued that journal, but lost the suit. The trial in December, 1846, and consequent discussion brought Poe's name prominently before the French public. (A.H. Quinn 1972: 517)

Unlike Baudelaire in the case of the "Notes nouvelles" (see Chapter Four), Forgues wanted to acknowledge his source, and in a sense he made up for things by publishing, in the *Revue des deux mondes*, a perspicacious essay on Poe's work.

This essay, entitled "Les contes d'Edgar Allan Poe," contains no biographical comments on Poe whatsoever, which contrasts strongly with Baudelaire's essays where biography is largely preponderant. Forgues concentrated uniquely on nine of Poe's tales, and as an experienced "anglophile," he was able to approach these with a much clearer understanding of their place in American literature, and a better insight in their contents than Baudelaire was to demonstrate later on. Forgues was familiar with a number of other American authors and was therefore able to place Poe's writing in the American context. He makes a relevant comparison, for instance, with Charles Brockden Brown and Washington Irving,

which shows that he was able to place Poe's fantastic fiction in the framework of the more "gothic" literature that was being produced in Poe's country of origin:

Nous avons déjà assimilé le talent de M. Poe à celui de Washington Irving, ce dernier, plus riant, moins ambitieux, et à celui de ce William Godwin ... si l'on voulait désigner, en Amérique même, un prédécesseur à M. Edgar Poe, on pourrait, sans trop forcer les analogies, le comparer à Charles Brockden Brown, qui, lui aussi, cherchait de bonne foi, jusque dans ses plus frivoles fictions, la solution de quelque problème intellectuel. (Forgues 1974 [1846]: 283)

Though it is true, as Lemonnier points out, that Forgues was unaware of the success that Poe had in America (Lemonnier 1928: 27), and that this hindered his construction of a complete picture of Poe's noteworthiness, it is also true that Forgues, not having any biographical material on Poe at his disposal, was forced to present Poe solely on the basis of what he had read of him – and Poe's image thus arrived unburdened by the biographical "information" that would posthumously slander it. Lemonnier, in the following lines, says as much, and thereby unwittingly undermines both Baudelaire's subsequent position and his own opinions on Baudelaire's treatment of Poe:

On peut surtout lui [Forgues] en vouloir d'avoir méconnu la personnalité de Poe ... Mais peut-être, après tout, son ignorance fut-elle bienfaisante. S'il avait jugé Edgar Poe sous l'influence de sa gloire aux Etats-Unis, il aurait présenté à son public une première image d'Edgar Poe semblable à l'image américaine; celle-ci aurait alors fait ombre sur le jugement français et l'aurait empêché de se manifester librement. (Lemonnier 1928: 28-29)

The same Lemonnier, however, will have no qualms with the very personal judgments that Baudelaire would bring to bear on his image of Poe. Regarding Forgues' comparisons with other American authors, and his ability to see Poe in an American context, it is important to note that, until evidence to the contrary arises, Baudelaire was wholly ignorant of these American contemporaries of Poe. The only other American authors ever mentioned by Baudelaire were Longfellow, Willis and Emerson, and he did so only after having stumbled upon their names in the biographical material he obtained on Poe. Forgues thus seems, at least as a

critic of anglophone and American literature, better placed than Baudelaire to assess Poe's work.

Another important aspect of the essay is Forgues' fascination with the analytical, logical and scientific side of Poe's work. Contrary to Baudelaire, who had a very idiosyncratic explanation for Poe's talent and genius, Forgues – and most contemporary critics now agree with him on this topic – was convinced that Poe's major quality was the force of his logical reasoning:

Poésie, invention, effets de style, enchaînement du drame, tout y est subordonné à une bizarre préoccupation, – nous dirions presque à une monomanie de l'auteur, – qui ne semble connaître qu'une faculté inspiratrice, celle du raisonnement; qu'une muse, la logique; qu'un moyen d'agir sur les lecteurs: le doute. (Forgues 1974 [1846]: 265)

Unlike Baudelaire, who, as will shortly be shown, preferred the more morbid side of Poe's work, Forgues thus saw Poe's analytical powers as his most laudable characteristic, and he ascribed Poe's genius to his logical prowess and strongly emphasized this throughout his discussion of the nine stories he had read. As the following extract shows, even in his discussion of "Mesmeric Revelation", with its shocking ending and its pseudo-scientific interest in hypnosis, Forgues continues to emphasize the analytical and logical quality of Poe's writing:

Toucher à ces grands secrets du trépas et de la fin du monde semble l'affaire des profonds penseurs, des méditations les plus longues, des systèmes les plus complets. Pour M. Poe, il ne s'agit que d'adopter une hypothèse, de poser un premier fait, et de lui faire engendrer, parmi ses conséquences probables et possibles, celles que l'esprit humain rattache entre elles le plus facilement et le plus volontiers. (Forgues 1974 [1846]: 266)

Over and over again, Forgues will thus focus on the logic in Poe's stories as one of his "habitudes favorites" (Forgues 1974 [1848]: 279). A last important difference to be noted between Forgues and Baudelaire is that Forgues did not have the same attitude towards American culture which Baudelaire would later demonstrate. Possibly because of his familiarity with American literature, Forgues

was not at all seduced by the America-bashing that was fashionable among certain Paris literati around the 1850s, and nowhere does one find the scathing anti-Americanism that pervades Baudelaire's essays.

Being very different in tone and approach from Baudelaire's writings, Forgues' early essay is thus an important document for this study, because it constitutes a background against which to judge Baudelaire's para-text to the translations, and thus to better evaluate Baudelaire's stance and project as a rewriter and translator. The extracts given above show that Forgues had a good grasp of the analytical aspects of Poe's fiction, and that he had also been able to deduce, without having read any of Poe's critical essays on writing and composition, parts of Poe's theory on writing. In the final analysis, Forgues' essay and the less personal and more objective stance it takes towards Poe's life and work raises the question as to how Poe would have been received in France had his critics continued their readings and translations of his work with Forgues' preponderant interest in the œuvre instead of in the life of Poe. Moreover, Forgues' fascination with the logic and reasoning in Poe would very likely have made for a different image of the author and a different introduction of Poe's work.

5.3.4.3. Baudelaire's Biographical Essays

Baudelaire's first stab at Poe biography, the 1848 preface to "Révélation magnétique", is also where he makes the only comment on his translation project – in the form of a defence of literalism – which has been discussed above (section 5.3.3.). Next comes the famous biographical essay "Edgar Poe, sa vie et ses ouvrages", published in *La revue de Paris* in 1852, which played a major part in establishing Baudelaire's image as Poe specialist and in preparing the French public for the publication of the *Histoires extraordinaires*, which appeared four years later. This is also the date of the second biographical essay, "Edgar Allan Poe, sa vie et ses œuvres", featuring as preface to the first collection. The second essay takes up many of the points that featured in the first, and together these two

essays form a pair of texts which, as Richard states, “à leur tour, inspireront Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Valéry, le Sar Péladan, et beaucoup d’autres, jusqu’à André Breton et Marie Bonaparte,” because they contain the essential aspects of the image that Baudelaire built for Poe. That these essays are problematic as far as their contents are concerned became clear from the beginning of their existence, witness the comments made by Jules Verne on the second essay:

Je vous dirai tout d’abord qu’un critique français, M. Charles Baudelaire, a écrit, en tête de sa traduction des œuvres d’Edgar Poe, une préface non moins étrange que l’ouvrage lui-même. Peut-être que cette préface exigerait-elle à son tour quelques commentaires explicatifs.
(Verne 1974 [1864]: 319)

It seems appropriate, then, to discuss in as much detail as necessary the problematic contents of these essays, not only because they reveal to a large extent the attitude that Baudelaire adopted to approach Poe and his work, but also because nearly all subsequent French biographical *and* textual criticism was based on them, as is confirmed by W.T. Bandy:

[“Edgar Poe: sa vie et ses ouvrages”] has probably been read by more people in different countries than anything ever written on Poe. It certainly had a major part in shaping the European view on Poe, which is so different from that which has prevailed in the United States, even to the present day. (Bandy 1973: ix)

5.3.4.4. Dubious Sources

The main problem that arises from these texts is revealed by Baudelaire himself in the 1856 essay: Baudelaire indicates that, since writing his first study on Poe in 1852, he has discovered that one of the American biographers of Poe, Rufus Griswold, spread false and defamatory information about Poe. Baudelaire decries the calumny as follows:

Quelques uns ont osé d’avantage, et, unissant l’intelligence la plus lourde de son génie à la férocité de l’hypocrisie bourgeoise, l’ont insulté à l’envi;

et, après sa soudaine disparition, ils ont rudement morigéné le cadavre, – particulièrement M. Rufus Griswold, qui, pour rappeler ici l'expression vengeresse de M. George Graham, a commis alors une immortelle infamie. ... Ce pédagogue-vampire a diffamé longuement son ami dans un énorme article, plat et haineux, juste en tête de l'édition posthume de ses œuvres. – Il n'existe donc pas en Amérique d'ordonnance qui interdise aux chiens l'entrée des cimetières? (Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1032)

What Baudelaire ignored, however, was that the large majority of his own descriptions of Poe were based on the very same article that he was reviling. Richard, who states correctly that, from the very beginning of his discovery of Poe, "Baudelaire s'éprend donc d'un fantôme" (Richard 1989: 12), explains how this happened:

N'en déplaise aux critiques baudelairiens qui ne cessent de répéter après W.T. Bandy que Baudelaire ne se serait pas inspiré de Griswold mais de Thompson et de Daniel. Ils ignorent que la source de Thompson et Daniel est encore Griswold, mais sous le nom de Ludwig et comme auteur de la notice nécrologique de 1849. Ainsi, ce sont les calomnies de Griswold qui se retrouvent non seulement dans la première étude [1852], mais encore dans sa préface aux *Histoires Extraordinaires* [1856]. (Richard 1989: 12)

The defamatory nature of the "Ludwig" article had been proclaimed widely during Baudelaire's days in the American press, and Baudelaire's apparent ignorance of these American defenders of Poe is surprising because Baudelaire shows in two ways that he was fully aware that these refutations existed, and that much of the biographical information that circulated on Poe was slanderous. Firstly, in the above citation from the 1856 essay, Baudelaire quotes George Rex Graham, whose open letter constituted a strong repudiation of Griswold's defamations. Graham had described Griswold's vulture-like behaviour as follows:

The man who could deliberately say of Edgar Allan Poe, in a notice of his life and writings, prefacing the volumes which were to become a priceless souvenir to all who loved him – that his death may startle many, "but that few would be grieved by it" – and blast the whole fame of the man by such a paragraph as follows, is a judge dishonoured. He is not Mr. Poe's peer, and I challenge him before the country, even as a juror in the case. (Graham 1986 [1850]: 377)

The open letter from which these lines were taken constituted very strong evidence that Poe was being unjustly mistreated by some of his American biographers. If Baudelaire was able to quote from this letter, it is very likely that he had the whole nine-page text at his disposal in 1856. Still, its contents do not seem to have inspired him into rectifying the image he had already formed.

Secondly, as early as the 1852 essay, Baudelaire himself points out that any biographical information on Poe coming from America, including that on which he is basing his preface, should be taken with a lot of caution:

Mais je crois avoir déjà suffisamment mis le lecteur en défiance contre les biographes américains. Ils sont trop bons démocrates pour ne pas haïr leurs grands hommes, et la malveillance qui poursuit Poe après la conclusion lamentable de sa triste existence, rappelle la haine britannique qui persécuta Byron. (Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1008)

Again, this remark, like similar remarks that feature in both essays, is significant for the way Baudelaire reveals his awareness that the biographical information on Poe had to be taken with a lot of scepticism. The following comments, which Baudelaire makes in the 1852 essay, and which concerns Longfellow's opinions of Poe, should dispense any doubts on whether Baudelaire knew that Poe had both defamers *and* defenders among the American public:

La mort fait quelquefois pardonner bien des choses. Nous sommes heureux de mentionner une lettre de M. Longfellow qui lui fait d'autant plus d'honneur qu'Edgar Poe l'avait fort maltraité.
(Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1014)

The article by Longfellow to which Baudelaire alludes is only one in a long series of articles and letters in praise of Poe which were published either as spontaneous obituaries, or in reaction to Griswold's reviews, from the publication of the "Ludwig" article onwards. A.H. Quinn (not to be confused with Patrick Quinn), who was the first to uncover the actual forgeries of Poe's correspondence by which Griswold had so adeptly reinforced his calumnies about Poe, shows that besides Graham, dozens of American literary men and women, and other friends

and acquaintances of Poe's rallied to the deceased author's defence when Griswold's defamatory report came out (see Quinn 1972: 645-661). These reactions can also be found in *Edgar Allan Poe – The Critical Heritage* (Walker 1986).

The reader should also be aware of the fact that Baudelaire managed to get his hands on two years' worth of articles from the *Southern Literary Messenger* when Poe was editing there, a publication which gave a very clear impression of Poe's literary status in America: "J'ai là, devant moi, la collection des numéros [of the *S.L.M.*] de ces deux années," says Baudelaire (Le Dantec 1951: 1018), which shows that he was well-aware of Poe's renown as editor, author and critic. There is enough ground to claim, then, that Baudelaire was conscious of the fact that the sources he was consulting, and the image he was painting, did not correspond to the real Poe: first, the abundance of refutations of Griswold's defamations in the American press, one of which (Graham) Baudelaire even quotes in the 1856 essay; second, Baudelaire's own affirmations that he knew there was slander in the air, and third, Baudelaire's silence on Poe's work as editor and member of the literary establishment. This shows that, had Baudelaire wished to consult additional and less insulting sources for his biographies of Poe, he was undoubtedly able to procure them for himself, and that if he didn't do so, he had his personal reasons for it. The following discussion will now reveal what Baudelaire's bias consisted of, and why he shaped his translation project in this personalised way.

5.3.4.5. Baudelaire's Distortions of Poe's Image

5.3.4.5. a. Alcohol and Drugs for a *Poète Maudit*

Instead of verifying his sources further, Baudelaire not only adopted all the slanders, but added to them, thus spreading a very distorted picture of Poe's life

and times. To begin with, the descriptions of Poe's death that had reached Baudelaire had dramatic ingredients that inevitably pleased Baudelaire:

Pour Baudelaire, le premier chef-d'œuvre de Poe, c'est sa mort: "Cette mort est presque un suicide, un suicide préparé depuis longtemps."
(Richard 1989: 12)³³

Regarding this so-called suicide, the reader may be reminded of the passage in the previous chapter, where Baudelaire was shown to regard death by suicide as an appropriately dramatic end for a *poète maudit*. As far as Poe was concerned, Baudelaire, having taken note of the exaggerated reports on Poe's drinking habits, thus decided that Poe's death was something like a suicide achieved by taking an alcohol or drug overdose. But Kenneth Silverman, who wrote the most recent biography on Poe, reports the following situation:

The cause of Poe's death remains in doubt. Moran's account of his profuse perspiration, trembling, and hallucinations indicates delirium tremens, *mania a potu*. Many others who had known Poe, including the professionally trained Dr Snodgrass, also attributed his death to a lethal amount of alcohol. Moran later vigorously disputed this explanation, however, and some Baltimore newspapers gave the cause of death as "congestion of the brain," or "cerebral inflammation." Although the terms were sometimes used euphemistically in public announcements of deaths from disgraceful causes, such as alcoholism, they may in this case have come from the hospital staff itself. According to Moran, one of its senior physicians diagnosed Poe's condition as encephalitis, a brain inflammation, brought on by "exposure." This explanation is consistent with the prematurely wintry weather at the time, with Snodgrass' account of Poe's poorly clad condition, and with Elmira Shelton's recollection that on leaving Richmond Poe already had a fever. Both explanations may have been correct: Poe may have become too drunk to care about protecting himself against the wind and rain. (Silverman 1991: 435-436)

Whatever the cause of his death may have been, there is certainly not enough evidence to establish Poe's drinking as alcoholism. Poe showed some erratic behaviour at certain points in his life, which some of his detractors attributed to alcohol abuse, though, as many others refuted, this was not always the truth of the

³³ Richard quotes from Baudelaire's second essay "Edgar Poe, sa vie et ses œuvres" (Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1036).

matter. George Lippard, a friend of Poe's, stated the following in reaction to Griswold's accusations:

He was not an intemperate man. When he drank, the first drop maddened him; hence his occasional departures from the line of strict propriety. But he was not an habitual drinker. (Lippard 1986 [1849]: 319)

Besides, many testimonies from Poe's more intimate friends explained his bizarre behaviour by the dramas that befell him and affected what everyone admitted was a sensitive personality. However things may have really stood, Baudelaire seized on Poe's supposed alcoholism with great enthusiasm, and instead of hedging the information on this issue in more doubtful terms, he exacerbated the impression:

Poe fuyait tout dans le noir de l'ivresse, comme dans le noir de la tombe; car il ne buvait pas en gourmand, mais en barbare; à peine l'alcool avait-il touché ses lèvres, qu'il allait se planter au comptoir, et il buvait coup sur coup, jusqu'à ce que son bon ange fut noyé, et ses facultés anéanties. (Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1016)

Incidentally, the same paragraph can again be found in Daniel's almost caricatural essay on Poe, which, as Richard (and Bandy before him) indicated, Baudelaire had consulted alongside Griswold's review:³⁴

Whenever he tasted alcohol he seldom stopped drinking it so long as he was able. He did drink most barbarously. ... When once the poison had passed his lips, he would go at once to a bar and drink off glass after glass as fast as its tutelary genius could mix them, until his faculties were swallowed up. (Daniel 1986 [1850]: 364)³⁵

In America, however, the essay from which these offensive lines are taken had been immediately followed with an apology by the embarrassed editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger* (see Walker 1986: 356). Still, Baudelaire never

³⁴ Bandy stated that for the 1852 edition of the essay, "Baudelaire was almost completely dependent on Daniel for the basic facts of Poe's life" (Bandy 1973: xxxii).

³⁵ When comparing the original lines with Baudelaire's repetition of them, above, it appears that Baudelaire had trouble understanding what was meant by "its tutelary genius," a noun phrase by which Daniel deprecatingly refers to the bartender.

stopped alluding to Poe's alcoholism as an established fact, and he did more than any of Poe's American biographers to further bend Poe's image in that direction.

Yet, the grossest fabrication on Poe is also Baudelaire's personal contribution to the Poe myth, which he established in the 1856 essay. Here, he explains the hallucinatory nature of some of Poe's narratives as follows:

L'espace est approfondi par l'opium; l'opium y donne un sens magique à toutes les teintes, et fait vibrer tous les bruits avec une plus significative sonorité. (Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1046)

Claude Richard confirms that Poe's supposed opium or laudanum use and addiction, which was later adopted as fact in a number of French studies on Poe, can be wholly attributed to Baudelaire. Indeed, none of the articles that appeared in the American press even suggested it. For Richard, there is no doubt that "La responsabilité de Baudelaire dans le mythe du drogué et de l'ivrogne est importante" (Richard 1989: 14), because:

... nul chercheur n'a jamais découvert la moindre trace de drogue dans la vie de Poe, si ce n'est cette unique dose de laudanum prise – pour se suicider ou calmer une rage de dents, nul ne sait. Je dis bien laudanum, inoffensif [sic] ingrédient de tant de médicaments au XIXe siècle. L'opiomanie d'Edgar Poe, cautionnée par d'insouciantes thèses de médecine, est née d'un rêve de Baudelaire. La mode a fait le reste. (Richard 1989: 14)

Indeed, Silverman confirms that:

It is true that opium figures in several of Poe's tales, and that in his time opium was easily available as an analgetic and tranquilizer, used for travel sickness, hangovers and a variety of ailments and nervous conditions. Just the same, it seems unlikely that Poe used the drug for any purpose beyond such general painkilling, if at all. (Silverman 1991: 481n)

At the same time, in Baudelaire's France, laudanum addictions were frequent, and the interesting side of the myth is that it is highly likely that Baudelaire himself

became addicted to the drug when he used it to stifle the pains caused by his syphilis. As was pointed out by Pichois and Ziegler in the previous chapter:

... l'opium, sous la forme du laudanum, lui devint bientôt "une vieille et terrible amie: comme toutes les amies, hélas! féconde en caresses et en trahisures" (*La chambre double*). (Pichois & Ziegler 1996: 220)

It thus emerges that Baudelaire, in the face of suggestions and even clear indications to the contrary, attributed to Poe a number of habits that were ruining his own health. As far as the opium myth is concerned, Chapter Seven will reveal that traces of this fabrication can also be found in Baudelaire's translations.

5.3.4.5. b. A Dandy's Perversions

Another liberty which Baudelaire took with Poe's biography was his suggestion that Poe was sexually impotent. This suggestion is important because it sheds light on how Baudelaire approached the stories where women play a major role, and should be briefly explained here. In the 1856 essay, Baudelaire discusses Poe's treatment of women in his short fiction in these terms:

Dans les *Nouvelles* de Poe, il n'y a jamais d'amour. ... malgré son prodigieux talent pour le grotesque et l'horrible, il n'y a pas dans toute son œuvre un seul passage qui ait trait à la lubricité ou même aux jouissances sensuelles. Ses portraits de femmes sont, pour ainsi dire, des auréoles; ils brillent au sein d'une vapeur surnaturelle et *sont peints à la manière emphatique d'un adorateur*. (Le Dantec 1951 [1956]: 1043 – my italics)

This passage, as Richard points out, can indeed be seen as a suggestion that Poe was sexually impotent – that, at least, is how subsequent critics have interpreted it. Richard describes how the ill-placed remark on Poe's person travelled through time:

Reprise dans de nombreuses études sur Edgar Poe qui se veulent d'inspiration psychanalytique, elle [cette remarque] sert de caution

littéraire à des discours qui ne s'inquiètent que de l'impuissance sexuelle de Poe. (Richard 1989: 15)

Furthermore, Richard accurately points out that the sensual or lubricious writing which Baudelaire was alluding to would have been impossible to find in any American literature of Poe's day anyway, and that Poe was actually, for his day and age, not to be categorised as a "chaste" writer at all:

Car Poe fut aussi un écrivain libertin, et c'est ce qui le distingue de ses contemporains. En effet, lequel des critiques qui s'étonnent de la chasteté de son œuvre a trouvé chez un écrivain américain antérieur à 1850 des allusions aux "jouissances sensuelles et à la lubricité?" ... L'audace sexuelle américaine d'avant Whitman, c'est une lettre rouge cousue sur une robe de bure. (Richard 1989: 15)

Baudelaire's innuendo about Poe's impotence thus became stuff for the type of psychoanalytical critiques among which the most famous one is Marie Bonaparte's lengthy study, which basically explains Poe's work by referring to a variety of symptoms of the Oedipus complex that steered not so much his characters', but Poe's own unconscious, thus wholly amalgamating the author and the protagonists of his stories (Bonaparte 1933). For the purposes of this study, Bonaparte's work is of some interest: it constitutes the kind of public epi-text that was engendered by Baudelaire's emphasis on the debauched aspects of Poe's persona, and it is the first study which, in a number of footnotes, comments on the quality of the Baudelaire translations. Another exponent of the critical school that adopted the fabrications on Poe's sexuality is Emile Lauvrière, who wrote *Le génie morbide d'Edgar Poe* (Lauvrière 1935).

The long-lasting success of Baudelaire's essays goes to show how important a role the Baudelairean para-text played in the reading of the translations it accompanied. Baudelaire's stance and project are thus clearly no longer a matter of translation proper, but one of creating the conditions for a reading that could carry the mark of the image he created for his source author, without raising suspicion. At the same time, moreover, it established Baudelaire, who appeared to know so much about Poe's personal life, as a very well-placed person to

translate his work. In this perspective, Baudelaire's stance and project have a strong aspect of personal appropriation. By showing, additionally, that Poe was not really an American author, this appropriation could then become a matter of nationality.

5.3.4.5.c. Poe's American Background

The last issue to be treated as part of Baudelaire's project is how Baudelaire saw and described Poe's position in America, both as a citizen and as a member of the literary system. As far as Poe's social position, his origins and his political views were concerned, Baudelaire again adapted the picture to a pre-construed image that gave the impression that Poe rejected and was rejected by his peers, both on a social and artistic level. The point of departure seems to have been, for Baudelaire, a desire to recognise in Poe a dandy-like character, and Poe's typically Southern views and mentality were interpreted with little understanding of the American context. From the next few paragraphs, one can deduce that Baudelaire reduced, in one stroke, the social and literary status of his author in his home country, while at the same time defining and introducing a character whose picture, not surprisingly, resembled his own.

Poe's origins, for instance, were of interest to his French biographer, and Baudelaire here again proceeded in a direction which brought Poe's image closer to that of a too refined, and too aristocratic dandy. It must be conceded that Poe himself had aggrandized both his origins and his life experience in an autobiographical note which he had sent to Griswold in the 1830s (see Quinn 1972: 646), in which he had, for instance, invented a European tour for himself which had taken him to Greece and Italy. But Poe's "aristocratic" opinions were misinterpreted by a Baudelaire who was clearly unable to place Poe's often satirical social commentaries in the North-American perspective of his day:

Poe, qui était de bonne souche, et qui d'ailleurs professait que le grand malheur de son pays était de n'avoir pas d'aristocratie de race, attendu,

disait-il, que chez un peuple sans aristocratie le culte du Beau ne peut que se corrompre, s'amoindrir et disparaître ... (Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1032)

This is rather misrepresenting Poe's social status and political beliefs. Edgar Allan Poe's "souche" began with an un-illustrious Irishman who had immigrated before the American Revolution. Poe's paternal grandfather, it is true, was a general who "had won notice for his self-sacrificing efforts during the American Revolution" and had been complimented by the Marquis de Lafayette (Silverman 1991: 25). Still, Poe's own parents were poor actors and had both died by the time he was three. Poe was taken in (but never adopted) by a tobacco merchant in Richmond, John Allan, who had nothing illustrious about him and even went bankrupt at one point in his career. Moreover, Poe severed ties with this source of financial security in 1831, and from then on his life was marked by the most extreme poverty.

Baudelaire did not discern that Poe's social and political views were not exceptionally "aristocratic" in the sense of un-democratic, in a mid nineteenth-century Southern and even American context. As Quinn points out with reference to Poe's writing on the topic of slavery, for instance:

Poe's article, for it is rather his own defence of slavery than a review, is calmly and sanely written from the point of view of a Southerner who had grown up in a family which owned slaves and who had sold a slave himself. (Quinn 1972: 249)

Baudelaire, however, hindered by his very limited knowledge of American society, pictured Poe as an American dandy whose opinions were to be viewed in a light that illuminated not so much the national, political and social context of this position, but Baudelaire's interpretation of it as an expression of Poe's detached disdain and indifference, in other words, Poe's dandyism:

Il vint un moment où il prit toutes les choses humaines en dégoût, et où la métaphysique seule lui était de quelque chose. Poe, éblouissant par son esprit son pays jeune et informe, choquant par ses mœurs des hommes qui se croyaient ses égaux, devenait finalement l'un des plus malheureux des écrivains. (Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1016)

Poe was not particularly out of touch with his own society and neither was he the social nor literary outcast that Baudelaire is here portraying. This is why Quinn wrote that “Those who speak of Poe as a stranger in a land where he was an accident, have evidently never read his criticism in the *Messenger* upon books dealing with public affairs” (Quinn 1972: 249). Incidentally, these reviews *were* familiar to Baudelaire, since, as was indicated earlier, he had in his possession two year’s worth of issues of the *Southern Literary Messenger* from the time when Poe was working there.

Poe’s writings in the *Southern Literary Messenger* should have also put Baudelaire on the trace of another important realisation: that the deceased Poe had so many enemies not so much because he was (supposedly) an eccentric and debauched aristocrat, but because he had angered a lot of people in the literary establishment with his severe criticism of their work. Poe was known as a precise, acerbic and unforgiving reviewer, and he staged certain battles (e.g. his attempt to uncover what he mistook for plagiarism of his work by Longfellow, known as the “Longfellow War” (Silverman 1991: 250)) that seriously strained his relationships with his peers. In her review of Poe’s collection *The Raven and Other Poems* (1845), Margaret Fuller half-wistfully warned that Poe’s fierce critiques would be repaid with the vengeance of an offended reviewer:

A large band of these offended dignitaries and aggrieved parents must be on the watch for a volume of “Poems by Edgar A. Poe,” ready to cut, rend and slash in turn, and hoping to see his own Raven left alone to prey upon the slaughter of which it is the herald.
(Fuller 1986 [1845]: 226-227)

Not alluding to Poe’s numerous and often vitriolic vituperations as the likely cause for the unfriendly biographical reviews that Poe was receiving is equal to severely reducing the level of Poe’s recognition (positive or negative) in America, and thus gaining more control over Poe’s literary history, in France and elsewhere. This was, then, Baudelaire’s way of establishing, prior to the appearance of his collection of translations, Poe’s literary background.

Part of Baudelaire's motivation in allotting such a marginal place for Poe in America seems to have been a feeling that had little to do with his knowledge of the real circumstances of Poe's life, and which expressed itself through a number of anti-American statements and accusations. To put it bluntly, Baudelaire detested America (or what he thought he knew about it), and, especially in the 1852 essay, went to great lengths in attributing Poe's misfortune and the supposed lack of recognition for his work to the mentality of the New Country's readers. America, in Baudelaire's opinion, was too materialistic to appreciate the refinements of Poe's poetic genius:

L'Américain est un être positif, vain de sa force industrielle, et un peu jaloux de l'ancien continent. Quant à avoir pitié d'un poète que la douleur et l'isolement pouvaient rendre fou, il n'en a pas le temps.
(Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1003)

And in the 1856 essay, Baudelaire holds on to this position and shows again how much he disliked America and what it represented to him:

Je répète que pour moi la persuasion s'est faite qu'Edgar Poe et sa patrie n'étaient pas de niveau. Les Etats-Unis sont un pays gigantesque et enfant, un peu jaloux du vieux continent. ... Le temps et l'argent ont là-bas une si grande valeur! L'activité industrielle, exagérée jusqu'aux proportions d'une manie nationale, laisse dans les esprits bien peu de place pour les choses qui ne sont pas de la terre. (Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1032)

Such a country, too busy with material gains and ignorant of the refined culture that Baudelaire had found in Poe, could not possibly have been fertile soil for a poet like Poe, and it was therefore not surprising, said Baudelaire, that Poe was better known and appreciated abroad than in his own country.³⁶

³⁶ This anti-Americanism was not exceptional in nineteenth century France. Barbey d'Aurevilly, a French critic and (temporary) friend of Baudelaire's, held very similar opinions on the New Country. In 1853 he wrote: "On le sait, l'Amérique n'est pas douce aux rêveurs. Elle agit trop pour les comprendre. C'est une fourmilière de travail enragé et d'activité matérielle" (Barbey d'Aurevilly 1990 [1853]: 33).

5.3.4.6. The Underpinnings of a Forged Image

As far as explaining Baudelaire's motives for forging Poe's degenerate image, the possibility of Baudelaire being unaware that the information upon which he was basing his image of Poe was false and defamatory, has already been discarded. If one accepts, then, that Baudelaire was aware of the dubiousness of his sources, one can now further question what motivated him to continue to focus on the dissipated aspect of Poe's character so strongly.

A first part of the underlying motivation can be deduced from the preceding sections, and is confirmed by Claude Richard, who claims that Baudelaire accentuated the intoxicated aspect of Poe's persona because it helped him justify his own bohemian lifestyle. As Richard puts it:

Le personnage que Griswold, Thompson et Daniel ont légué à Baudelaire lui est utile pour justifier sa propre vie et son propre caractère.
(Richard 1989: 12)

Baudelaire actually confirms this opinion in the 1852 essay, where he admits in his conclusion:

Je le dis sans honte, parce que je sens que cela part d'un profond sentiment de pitié et de tendresse, Edgar Poe, ivrogne, pauvre, persécuté, paria, me plait plus que calme, et *vertueux*, un Goethe ou un W. Scott.
(Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1029)

In other words, Poe's invented persona suited Baudelaire because it constituted a vehicle for his thoughts and a vindication of his own tastes and lifestyle.

Weightman's remarks on this topic also show that the procedure was an important part of Baudelaire's stance and project:

In all this, Baudelaire seems to be painting Poe in his own image, rather than seeing his complexities objectively as they are, and appreciating his works in detail. (Weightman 1987: 205)

Another reason why Baudelaire became so convinced that Poe had lead as dissipated a life as his own was that, like so many of Poe's readers in the nineteenth century, both in France and in America, he identified Poe with the characters in his stories. Richard states the case of Baudelaire's erroneous identification of Poe with the heroes of his stories in very unambiguous terms:

Baudelaire est donc bel et bien l'inventeur du mythe français de Poe et notamment du plus tenace de ses aspects: la confusion entre les personnages et leur créateur. ... C'est encore la subversion de l'œuvre par l'homme. Il était impossible que la psychanalyse, à qui Baudelaire a légué un alcoolique, un halluciné et un impuissant, ne s'empara pas d'Edgar Poe, de l'homme. (Richard 1989: 16)

Indeed, for Baudelaire, most of what Poe wrote was based on real experiences and therefore largely autobiographical, and since Poe wrote a number of stories which suggest that the narrator is either intoxicated, hallucinating, or mad, Baudelaire decided that Poe must have experienced such states of mind himself. In the 1852 essay, for instance, Baudelaire describes his reading of Poe as follows:

C'est un plaisir très grand et très utile que de comparer les traits d'un grand homme avec ses œuvres. (Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1014)

More explicitly, Baudelaire stated that:

Tous les contes de Poe sont pour ainsi dire biographiques. On trouve l'homme dans l'œuvre. Les personnages et les incidents sont le cadre et la draperie de ses souvenirs. (Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1004)

It should be added that Richard was not entirely just in designating Baudelaire as the initiator of the habit of identifying Poe with the protagonists of his stories: Griswold and other American biographers had given the example of a critical technique that was commonplace in discussions on Poe. Griswold wrote, for instance:

Nearly all that he wrote in the last two or three years – including much of his best poetry – was in some sense biographical; in draperies of his

imagination, those who had taken the trouble to trace his steps, could perceive, slightly covered, the figure of himself.
(Griswold 1986 [1849]: 301)

Again, the attentive reader will have remarked evidence of Baudelaire's gleaning from Griswold, when comparing this quotation with Baudelaire's words cited above. Besides Griswold's, other nineteenth-century reviews of Poe's work show that the structure of Poe's first person narratives in particular confounded readers into believing that Poe and his narrators were one and the same man. The previously quoted article by Verne constitutes another early example of this confounded criticism: Verne here wrongly assumes that Poe came to Paris and had a detective friend called Auguste Dupin:

Après de curieuses observations, par lesquelles il prouve que l'homme vraiment imaginaire n'est jamais autre chose qu'un analyste, il [Poe] met en scène un ami à lui, Auguste Dupin, avec lequel il demeurait à Paris dans une partie reculée et solitaire du faubourg Saint Germain.
(Verne 1974 [1864]: 320)

Though Baudelaire can thus not be accused of being its initiator, the identification between Poe and his characters did become the basis both for Baudelaire's image of Poe, and for his approach to Poe's work.

A last element of significance for one's understanding of how Baudelaire's image of Poe could have affected his stance and project is Baudelaire's explanation of Poe's talent and genius. By the following lines, Baudelaire showed that he was not at all convinced that Poe had any real and sustained talent as a poet. In discussing Poe's supposed alcoholism, Baudelaire stated that:

... je crois que, dans beaucoup de cas, non pas certainement dans tous, *l'ivrognerie de Poe était un moyen mnémonique, une méthode de travail, méthode énergique et mortelle, mais appropriée à sa nature passionnée. Le poète avait appris à boire, comme un littérateur soigneux s'exerce à faire des cahier de notes.* (Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1044 – my italics)

That Poe, unlike Baudelaire who, as Toubin indicated (see Chapter Four) often worked in cafés while drinking wine, was not the kind of habitual drinker who

wrote best when intoxicated, is abundantly clear from the open letters and other writings of those who knew him or wanted to defend him against Griswold's calumniations: the testimonies of Nathaniel Parker Willis (Walker 1986 [1849]: 307-312), of Evert Augustus Duyckinck (Walker 1986 [1850]: 337-341), the previously quoted George Rex Graham (Walker 1986 [1850]: 376-384) and also John Neal (Walker 1986 [1850]: 385-393), are only a few examples of authors who refuted the accusation that Poe was a "habitué" in the domain of alcohol abuse. His use of alcohol as a stimulant while writing, as was probably Baudelaire's habit, is therefore completely out of the question.

This element shows, though, that Baudelaire made a perverse "tuteur" for Poe, a guardian who set out to diminish his protégé's merit by attributing a good part of his genius to an invented alcohol or drug abuse. The impression that Baudelaire gave of Poe's isolation in the American literary system gave him more liberty to say whatever he pleased about this "unknown" author, and Baudelaire's need to defend his own lifestyle meant that a genius with habits that were as "immoral" as his own was a godsend. The identification of Poe with the characters in his stories was the final blow to a literary destiny that had been drawn up as soon as Baudelaire's biographical essays began to impinge on the French readers' minds. Poe in France thus became Baudelaire's Poe, and Baudelaire fashioned Poe's image to reflect his own, and constructed a picture that would, by diminishing Poe's own genius, further justify his full appropriation of Poe's work. All these factors are a part of Baudelaire's project for the *translatio* of Poe, and show that if he had a stance in translation, its main characteristic was a total appropriation of the persona of the source author.

5.3.4.7. The Persistence of a Forged Image

Owing to Baudelaire's propagation of Poe's supposed drug addictions, this forged picture remained for many readers, not only in France but also elsewhere in Europe, the hallmarks of Poe's persona and, more damagingly, of his writing too. As has already been indicated with Richard, in France the Baudelaire essays

served as a basis for any subsequent interpretations of Poe's work, and in order to demonstrate how persistent this image still is, a few examples will be given of critics who unquestioningly adopted Baudelaire's slanted descriptions of Poe. The impact of Baudelaire's biographical reports was immediate, and can be gleaned from Amédée Pichot's preface to his own collection of translations, the *Nouvelles choisies d'Edgard Poë* [sic] published in 1853, which will be taken up again in Chapter Eight. The preface is Pichot's imitation of Baudelaire's way of looking at Poe:

Edgar Poë [sic] avait vendu son âme à l'alcool, comme il l'eût vendue au diable s'il avait cru au diable, ce qui est douteux, malgré quelques-unes de ses diaboliques élucubrations. Il mourut à l'hôpital, le 7 octobre 1849, après vingt-quatre heures de délire. (Pichot 1853: iv-v)

A decade later, Jules Verne showed that, in spite of the reserve he had expressed regarding Baudelaire's essay, he had no qualms with the alcoholised image that Baudelaire had painted for Poe, nor with the attribution of Poe's genius to it:

... il faut dire que le malheureux Poe demandait souvent à l'ivresse de l'eau-de-vie ses plus étranges inspirations. (Verne 1974 [1864]: 319)

Much more recently than Verne, we find evidence of the persistence of Poe's debauched and distorted image, in the form of random biographical comments by which Poe was *still* being introduced, in France, in the 1970s:

Il meurt dans la rue, à Baltimore, dans des circonstances demeurées mystérieuses, auxquelles l'abus de laudanum n'est probablement pas étranger. (Cassou 1979: 202)

The obstinacy of certain scholars in wanting to maintain the Poe myth is remarkable, and very visible in Roger Asselineau, whose study is described by Buranelli as "a belated reappearance of the vulgar and horrific Poe" (Buranelli 1977: 150). In a preface to a bilingual edition of Poe's work, Asselineau seems to doubt A.H. Quinn's capacities as a biographer, and continues to explain Poe by identifying him with his characters:

Personne n'a jamais eu l'idée de nier qu'il s'enivrât – la chose était, du vivant de Poe, de notoriété publique –, mais, pour le blanchir partiellement, certains biographes comme Arthur H. Quinn ont essayé de prouver qu'il ne faisait jamais usage de stupéfiants. C'est nier l'évidence. Baudelaire qui s'y connaissait ne s'y est pas trompé. (Asselineau 1968: 34)

Lastly, an even more recent example of a believer in the Poe myth is Guy Michaud, a French literary scholar who in 1995 still managed to write the following about Poe:

Mais voici qu'un jour il demande à l'opium la révélation systématique des mondes imaginaires. ... et le reste de sa vie ne sera plus qu'une lente descente dans des paradis artificiels qui ne sont que des enfers. (Michaud 1995: 22)

Having lasted thus for over 150 years, it is clear, then, that the image that Baudelaire forged for Poe is extremely obdurate and still haunts even the non-average reader's imagination today. The amazing thing is that hardly anyone ever suspects the translations of being marked by that forged image.

5.3.5. Conclusions Regarding Baudelaire's Stance and Project

When contrasting this state of affairs with the scenario that might have unfolded if the critics had limited themselves, as Forgues, to concentrating on the *works* of Poe, one realises that Poe's destiny in France could have been entirely different. Whereas, once Baudelaire's first biographical essay came out, Poe was turned into a maniac, he might then have been remembered, with Forgues' descriptions, as an analytical genius. Moreover, Baudelaire was not an experienced reader of English, and proved that he knew very little about American literature or culture. Still, his strongest wish, besides being a poet, was to be Poe's guardian in France. One is thus looking at a translator whose stance and project were entirely situated on a personal and meta-textual level, and, as has been repeatedly pointed out, whose interest in the actual work was of secondary importance. The factors that established Baudelaire *a priori* as Poe specialist, and as the most apt person to

translate Poe into French, were Baudelaire's own claims about Poe's life and about their so-called resemblances, cautioned by comments from his literary friends and from other authors, and combined with his relatively easy access as a literary critic to the printed press.

Throughout the first part of this chapter the aim has also been to show in a symptomatic manner how authors from different strands of the French literary system have continued to feed the self-fulfilling prophecy by virtue of which Baudelaire became Poe's exclusive guardian, and which permanently established Poe's reputation as a degenerate and accidental genius. Interestingly, it is now an accepted fact in French academic writing that Baudelaire's Poe was a fabricated persona (see, for instance, the prefaces in Joguín 2002 or Richard 1989), but the details of the transformation have not been reassembled to reconstruct the full picture of what makes up Baudelaire's Poe. Moreover, the majority of French scholars do not seem to have apprehended the repercussions that Baudelaire's project may have had on the translations – witness the fact that *very* recent writings (such as Joguín 2002) continue to rely for their interpretations of Poe's work on the Baudelaire translations. Baudelaire's personalised stance and project as expressed in the para-text to the translations thus continue to be an integral part of the way Poe is being read in France.

5.4. The French Literary Horizon

5.4.1. Introduction

The description of the literary horizon in which the translations arrived should allow one to better trace its possible influence on the reading which the translations would generate. As the discussion on intertextuality in Chapter Two demonstrates, any rewriting is also composed of the (re)writings that surround it in the literary field, and elements of Poe's work were indeed already present in French literature. Moreover, if one wants to discern powers of patronage and/or poetics which may have had their bearing on the way in which Poe was translated,

one needs to be familiar with the likely sources of these influences. A description of the literary horizon thus gives the conditions of the target literary field, and focuses on those aspects of it that may have influenced the translator's choices.

The following sections therefore deal with French literature as a target system. The ways in which the work of Poe that was translated by Baudelaire compared in form and content to what was being read in France in the 1850s will be discussed, but the details of the influence that Poe had on French literature once his work became a part of the French literary canon will not be treated here – the latter subject has already filled many volumes in comparative literature. Instead, the following discussion will be restricted to those parts of the French literary system that were most closely related to the form and content of what Baudelaire and others were introducing by their translations of Poe.

5.4.2. The Short Story in French Literature

In the 1840s-1850s, when most of Poe's stories were being translated into French for the first time, short story writing in itself did not add anything new to French literature, where the term *nouvelle* was being used to cover anything from philosophical essays to fairy tales. During the nineteenth century, the popularity of the short story rose most prominently, in France and in America, and its proliferation is illustrated by the existence of a number of different terms to designate short stories, which in English could still vary between "tale" or, by the end of the century, "short tale" and "little story" (Shaw 1992: 5). In France, the terminology was restricted to *nouvelle*, used in a general way from the 1850s onwards to designate short stories. Poe himself referred to his stories as "phantasy pieces" (Mabbott 1978: 475), "prose tale(s)," "short prose narrative(s)" (Poe 1984 [1847]: 572) and "prose romance(s)" (Mabbott 1978: 474), depending on the topic of the story. He called the detective stories, which will be examined in a moment, "tales of ratiocination," a term which neither France nor America ever adopted in a general manner. Whatever it was being called, the rise of the short

story in the nineteenth century is further explained by the enormous increase in printed press productions, especially newspapers and magazines:

Genre en marge, sinon genre contestataire, la nouvelle est un genre en faveur: liée à la naissance de la grande presse, elle dispute au roman le titre de genre mondial. (Souiller & Troubetzkoy 1997: 298)

The short story may have existed for centuries, then, but only in the nineteenth century did it become recognised as a form in its own right, and as far as the English and French language domains are concerned, it was Edgar Allan Poe who first laid down the rules for writing a successful short story, rules which would allow one to describe the difference “between a short story and a story that happens to be short” (Shaw 1992: 9):

As far back as 1842 Edgar Allan Poe had formulated basic principles for the composition of short prose narratives, relating the writer’s aims directly to the brevity of the form. (Shaw 1992: 9)

Though Poe’s ideas on the topic were the first critical discussion of issues that also concerned the composition of short stories, the reader now knows that in France, these ideas were inevitably attributed to Baudelaire, who had repeated them as his own words in the “Notes nouvelles” and in his essay on Théophile Gautier – where, as was shown in the previous chapter, he paraphrases Poe’s “The Poetic Principle” and “The Philosophy of Composition”. Moreover, the title of the latter text having been reduced by Baudelaire to apply uniquely to poetry (“La genèse d’un poème”), one can now see more clearly how Baudelaire’s restriction helped to impede a view of Poe as one of the originators of the short story as a literary form. The ideas expressed in these essays were novel in France and their arrival constituted a significant addition to the target literary system – an addition for which Poe remains largely underrated in France.

The lack of theoretical foundations which existed in France when Poe’s theories arrived there does not mean that no short stories were being produced: France had imported the short story as a renewed genre with the German Romantics (Tieck,

Goethe, Hoffmann) and French writers like Théophile Gautier and Champfleury (both friends of Baudelaire), Alexandre Dumas or Prosper Mérimée had all tried their pen at the form – but none of these authors had any theoretical foundations for their practice of short story writing. One thing, however, they did have in common with Poe's use of the short story, and also with Tieck's and Schlegel's initial descriptions of it: in all these cases, the short story form is closely tied up with the genre that is up next for discussion:

Tieck, ... like Schlegel, argued that the short story should be strange and unique, but should, in spite of that strangeness, seem commonplace and be presented as objectively taking place. (May 1991: 9)

This “strange” aspect in the short story, which was so fruitfully exploited by Poe in what has come to be called fantastic and/or gothic literature, will now be discussed in more detail.

5.4.3. Fantastic Literature in Baudelaire's Time

5.4.3.1. Gothic vs. Fantastic Literature

In its contemporary usage, the trouble with the term “fantastic” is that it is not the designation most often used by the anglophone (and especially American) literary critics to designate the more horrific, terrific and bizarre parts of Poe's short fiction. Poe wrote very eclectically and his fiction ranged from parody to romance to screeching horror, and this may be one of the reasons why the terminology is not internationally harmonised, and why in French criticism of Poe, the term “fantastique” is used for stories which in English are more often called “gothic.” In the following paragraphs, besides a discussion on fantastic literature in France, a distinction will therefore have to be made between gothic and fantastic literature, in order to establish the argument that, if we have to categorise, Poe's writing is probably more efficiently described as “fantastic.”

First of all, as was already indicated in the previous section, fantastic literature and the short story are a genre and form that go hand in hand. Guissard pertinently points out certain common traits, such as narrative structure and the importance of the unity of effect culminating in what is usually a climactic ending, and states that there is a “fundamental” link between the short story and the fantastic genre. (Guissard 1997: 261-263). Indeed, the difficulty of sustaining unity of effect in a long text is still often used as an argument for the case that the short story and the fantastic genre are inextricably fused.

The name “fantastic” literature was used consistently in France from the 1830s onwards. There are actually two periods of popularity for this genre in France: the first is around 1830, and the second occurred during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, with Guy de Maupassant as its most prominent practitioner. The second period is not really of any concern here, but the relevance of the first period is that France had already seen a number of samples of “fantastic” literature by the time Poe’s stories arrived there:

En France, Mérimée, Balzac (*L’Eglise*, 1831; *Le chef-d’œuvre inconnu*, 1832), Th. Gautier (*Onuphrius*, 1832) sont avec Alexandre Dumas et George Sand les créateurs d’un fantastique original.
(Souiller & Troubetzkoy 1997: 279)

In discussing the success of the fantastic genre around the 1830s, Pichois and Milner mention the strong impact of Hoffmann’s *Tales*, whose success only faded around 1835 (Milner & Pichois 1996: 151). They cite, as fantastic stories dating from that period, Mérimée’s *La Vénus d’Ille*, Gautier’s *Le pied de la momie*, Balzac’s *L’Auberge rouge* and Nodier’s *Inès de las Sierras* (Milner and Pichois 1996: 152). Poe’s stories in the fantastic genre thus arrived in a literary system which already featured similar experiments.

This period also saw the first technical and critical description of the genre, from Charles Nodier, an author who was also associated with *bousingotism* and who wrote “frenetic” or what was still being called “Romantic” literature:

Dès le début du XIX^e siècle, au moment où le fantastique connaît son essor, certains se sont efforcés de poser les assises théoriques du genre et de mettre à jouer ses origines. Nodier, en particulier, rédige en 1830 un véritable manifeste, *Du fantastique en littérature*. (Malrieu 1992: 6)

The contents of Nodier's manifesto show that it had already become necessary to separate and clearly delineate two different genres that were crossing over into each other at that time: fantastic literature, on the one hand, and "gothic" literature, associated in France with the literature of the *bousingots*, the "romantisme obscur," on the other. Unlike Germany, where Hoffmann's *Tales* went in a distinctly "fantastic" direction, many authors in both France and England were still under the thrall of a different kind of fiction:

Dans ces deux pays, c'est plutôt la mode du roman gothique, ou roman noir, qui prévaut. ... Apparue à la fin du XVIII^e siècle ... le roman gothique, qualifié aussi symptomatiquement de "frénétique," connaît pendant trente ans un succès considérable. (Malrieu 1992: 7)

The gothic genre – also called "German" horror in America, where it was practised, for instance, by Washington Irving and Brockden Brown – was part of the background against which fantastic literature arrived in France, and from which it had to be distinguished, because some of the recurring elements of gothic novels and stories also belonged to fantastic literature. These have already mentioned in the previous chapter in the section on the *bousingots*, and some of them are repeated here with Malrieu:

Le roman gothique, qu'il débouche à la fin sur une explication rationnelle comme chez Ann Radcliffe ou se maintienne dans les cadres du surnaturel comme chez Lewis, repose sur un certain nombre de procédés à effets: châteaux hantés, cimetières, moines inquiétants, apparitions démoniaques de toutes sortes. (Malrieu 1992: 8).

Fantastic literature, on the other hand, "ne saurait être défini par les ingrédients qui composent les œuvres" (Malrieu 1992: 18). In other words, whereas fantastic literature is based, as Milner and Pichois put it, on a "surplus de sens" (Milner and Pichois 1996: 153), gothic literature can be summarised by the elements that it brings into play. The "surplus de sens" is the same as Poe's "undercurrents of

meaning,” which he described as a characteristic of “that class of compositions in which there lies beneath the transparent upper current of meaning an under or *suggestive* one” (Poe 1984 [1840]: 333-341), i.e. fantastic literature.

In order to explain Milner and Pichois’ “surplus de sens” on a more fundamental level, the very different world views that underlie both genres must be understood more fully. In gothic literature, the characters are victims of the strange forces that affect them, without doubting their reality or existence, whereas in fantastic literature, the protagonists are perplexed and querying whether the strange things they observe are real or not. One could say, using Coleridge’s words, that the suspension of disbelief is total and absolute in gothic literature, whereas in fantastic literature, disbelief is both suspended and invoked by the vacillations of the characters. This causes an uncertainty in the reader, who is supposed to hesitate between natural and supernatural explanations, which, as Cromwell indicates, is also the main characteristic attributed to fantastic literature since Todorov:

The point of departure will be Todorov’s notion of hesitation on the part of the reader between a natural and supernatural (prenatural or “marvellous”) explanation of the events presented in the narrative. (Cromwell 1990: 4)

In this sense, using terminology applied by Souiller and Troubetzkoy in a comparison between fantastic literature and fairy tales, gothic literature, like marvellous literature, is “non-thetical” (“anti-thétique”), i.e. it does not posit a thesis of plausibility, it does not dissimulate the fact that the world it creates is imaginary, it does not try to establish a realistic framework or even a semblance of reality, but simply presents an obviously fictional world in which the strange things it describes can unfold (see Souiller & Troubetzkoy 1997: 277-278). Fantastic literature, on the other hand, is “thetical,” i.e. it posits the *possibility* of there being a realistic explanation for the events described, a technique which, resulting from a mixture of elements that are both realistic and imaginary, entails an impression of improbability, ambiguity and uncertainty:

Si le conte merveilleux est *non-thétique*, le récit fantastique a besoin d'une très forte motivation réaliste et multiplie le recours au vraisemblable: le récit fantastique est *thétique*. ... Plaçant ce monde-ci comme l'autre sous le signe d'une inguérissable incertitude, le fantastique frappe le discours littéraire lui-même d'improbabilité.
(Souiller & Troubetzkoy 1997: 277-278)

In Poe's stories, this uncertainty, emanating as it does from the instability of the ontological status of events, is often obtained by another Poe speciality, namely the strategy of creating a narrator who observes things from the fringes of sanity or in some state of mental alienation. The technique of the deluded narrator-witness was not new in France, where an interest in altered mental states expressed itself in stories that featured dreams and dream-like experiences, Mesmerism, etc. The unconscious was of increasing interest, and was no longer considered as an inaccessible Pandora's box, but as a reservoir that could be studied to reveal the deeper contents of the soul. It was again Nodier who pioneered in writing both a study on sleep (*Sur quelques phénomènes du sommeil*) and a story built around a nightmare (*Smarra*) (Milner and Pichois 1996: 148-149).³⁷

Fantastic literature thus certainly existed in France when Poe's work arrived there, but the genre was not clearly separated from gothic literature. The difference that is here established between the two should enable one to decide whether Poe's fantastic stories were read as non-thetical (i.e. gothic) tales, or as thetical (i.e. fantastic) narratives, and the analyses of the translations, especially the one which fills up Chapter Seven and deals with "The Fall of the House of Usher," will determine whether the translation marks the French text with the characteristics of either of the two genres.

As far as their original English versions are concerned, none of Poe's "romantic" stories are entirely and purely gothic, but all of them can be described as fantastic. The fact that Poe admired and was influenced by writers like Tieck and Coleridge

³⁷ This interest is also explained by the fact that many literary figures and their acquaintances (e.g. Gérard de Nerval, Prosper Mérimée, Victor Hugo's brother Eugène) suffered from psychological ailments (Milner & Pichois 1996: 149).

also supports this view. When describing his “endeavours” which would become a part of the *Lyrical Ballads*, Coleridge stated that his aims were the following:

... my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural; or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. (Coleridge 1956 [1817]: 168-169)

That this was also Poe’s aim, and that Poe did not wish to be considered as an author of pure gothic, becomes clear from his reply to the charge that his stuff was too “German,” (i.e. too gothic). Indeed, Poe indicated in the preface to the *Tales of the Grotesque and the Arabesque* that his stories were based on the same psychological processes which Coleridge discussed:

But the truth is that, with a single exception, there is no one of these stories in which the scholar should recognise the distinctive features of that species of pseudo-horror which we are taught to call Germanic, for no better reason than that some of the secondary names of German literature have become identified with its folly. If in many of my productions terror has been the thesis, I maintain that terror is not of Germany, but of the soul, – *that I have deduced this terror only from its legitimate sources, and urged it only to its legitimate results.* (Mabbott 1978: 473 – my italics)

With “legitimate sources” Poe is referring to the same things as Coleridge, i.e. altered states of consciousness, and this statement thus confirms that Poe, at least the English-language Poe, can be placed safely under the label of “fantastic” literature. This claim will be further borne out when taking a closer look at Poe’s concerns about the differences between “fancy” and “imagination,” which will be part of the discussion in Chapter Seven.

5.4.3.2. The Grotesque and the Arabesque

Poe also practised a number of genres closely connected to fantastic literature, as his title *Tales of the Grotesque and the Arabesque* indicates. The terms grotesque and arabesque, and their practice as literary forms had appeared in France

alongside fantastic literature, though, as the section on “fancy” in Chapter Seven will show, their meaning and contents were not the same for everyone. In France, the voyages to and discoveries in the Middle East and South-east Asia stimulated an interest in oriental and exotic decors, whereas political developments causing a greater freedom of expression, combined with the fashionable decline in morals as represented by, for instance, the dandy and the *bousingot*, gave birth both to caricatures and grotesques. Malrieu summarizes the period as follows:

En littérature comme en musique ou en peinture à la même époque, entre le fantastique, le grotesque et l’arabesque, formes qui présentent des liens étroits et sont inséparables de la redécouverte de la culture orientale au début du XIXe siècle, se jouent l’affranchissement des règles et l’abandon de l’alibi moral ou didactique. (Malrieu 1992: 11)

Poe’s grotesques and arabesques could thus be welcomed on familiar grounds, and the evolution in morals and the greater freedom of expression, which went hand in hand with a refusal of any kind of didactic or ethical purpose for literature, was welcomed by Baudelaire and translated into the motto “l’Art pour l’art.”

Besides grotesques and arabesques, Poe also wrote scientific and pseudo-scientific narratives (some of which turned into grotesques), where the presentation of a new concept, object or procedure arouses an interpretation that often takes into account both natural and supernatural explanations, and these other genres were also classified along with fantastic literature – incidentally, the use of the term “pseudo-scientific” should not induce any doubt as to Poe’s earnestness in dealing with these topics: when he was not hoaxing, Poe was a scientific enthusiast, and many of the disciplines that were practised in his time and that have long since been relegated to the realms of pseudo-science, were then considered genuine scientific experiments. In France, though people had become used to the “strange” aspect of these narratives, Poe’s experiments with modern science in fiction arrived as a new procedure. The topics that were taken up by Poe in the margin of fantastic literature crisscrossed the fields of the new modern sciences, discoveries and fashions which appeared and developed during the nineteenth century:

psychology, phrenology, Mesmerism, biology, medicine, astronomy, geography, physics, etc. Still, being engendered by an age and culture that was under the thrall of its scientific discoveries, these stories were not at all out of place in the French literary system – as Pichois and Milner put it, “le fantastique ne peut naître que dans une culture qui, comme celle de la France au début du XIXe siècle, a assimilé une vision scientifique du monde” (Milner and Pichois 1996: 151).

When the work of Poe, who was one of the great explorers of the fantastic genre, arrived in France, it contributed to its revival from the 1850s onwards, since his writings expanded the genre by using literary techniques that were largely unpractised in France. The technical side of Poe, i.e. his ideas on literary composition which were discussed in the previous chapter, are what made the difference. The French public thus had certain expectations as to what a fantastic story should look like, and Poe’s short fiction not only fitted that framework quite easily, but added a number of stylistic and narrative experiments and features to it that were to haunt the French imagination for a long time to come. However, an important part of Poe’s more scientifically oriented stories were also the first samples of what was to become a genre on its own. This group were described by Poe as “tales of ratiocination,” and the next section will delineate the literary horizon against which these analytical tales can be described.

5.4.4. The Arrival of the Detective Story in French Literature

The short stories which Poe categorised himself as “tales of ratiocination” are the three “Dupin” tales, i.e. “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” “The Mystery of Marie Roget” and “The Purloined Letter,” thus called because the main character is a detective by the name of Auguste Dupin, and “The Gold Bug,” roughly described as a story about a treasure hunt. The latter will be taken up for analysis in Chapter Eight.

The tale of ratiocination or analytical tale was a Poe specialty, and as Forgues’ initial reaction on Poe’s writing has already made clear, it was one of the

techniques which most intrigued the nineteenth-century French readers, not in the least because Poe was the first author they had ever read who developed a narrative in such a precise and calculated manner. According to Buranelli, Poe “became the only American ever to invent a form of literature” (Buranelli 1977: 81), but the pioneering role which Poe played in the development of the detective story and other investigative fiction is probably even better illustrated by the following lines from his most illustrious disciple in the genre, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle:

Edgar Allan Poe, who, in his carelessly prodigal fashion, threw out the seeds from which so many of our present forms of literature have sprung, was the father of the detective tale, and covered its limits so completely that I fail to see how his followers can find any fresh ground which they can confidently call their own. (quoted in Matthews 1966 [1907]: 90)

In France, the interest in police investigations, judiciary procedures and criminal activities was not, however, a new fashion, as Dubois confirms:

Dès le romantisme, la thématique criminelle-policière se met en place et trouve une première expression esthétique. Dans ses fictions cultivées comme dans ses fictions populaires, la littérature romantique confère un profil moderne aux figures du malfaiteur et du justicier. (Dubois 1992: 14)

Poe’s detective Dupin, however, was in many ways a completely new kind of protagonist, and Poe’s narratives were not only shorter, but also had a structural trait that distinguished them from previous police narratives. As May explains, Poe’s tales of ratiocination are “works in which questions of interpretation are not outside the body of the story but are involved in every stage of the narrative development” (May 1991: 82), which is why they are now so successful with post-modern literary theorists. “Poe’s detective stories,” says May:

are about creating patterns that are really already there. It is all a matter of accepting a mystery as text, a contextual pattern made up of motifs or clues that have meaning precisely because of the role they play within that pattern. (May 1991: 83)

No story had been read before in France which had as its sole focus the progressive solution of an enigma, and no story had been read that managed to suggest the force of the underlying logic so deftly. For Poe, however, the technique of ratiocination was not such an exceptional feat, and he wrote about his ratiocination tales that “people think they are more ingenious than they are – on account of their method and *air* of method” (quoted in Mabbott 1978: 521), and explained that they were simply processes of deduction written in reverse, where the challenge lay not so much in the deduction, but in achieving an effect of ambiguity and doubt. He further wrote to his friend Philip Pendleton Cooke:

Where is the ingenuity of unravelling a web which you yourself (the author) have woven for the express purpose of unravelling? The reader is made to confound the ingenuity of the superstitious Dupin with that of the writer of the story. (quoted in Mabbott 1978: 521)

Indeed, as Matthews confirms:

In the true detective story as Poe conceived it in the “Murders in the Rue Morgue,” it is not in the mystery itself that the author seeks to interest the reader, but rather in the successive steps whereby his analytic observer is enabled to solve a problem that might well be dismissed as beyond human elucidation. Attention is centred on the unravelling of the tangled skein rather than on the knot itself. The emotion aroused is not mere surprise, it is recognition of the unsuspected capabilities of the human brain ... (Matthews 1966 [1907]: 85-86)

As was demonstrated in the first part of this chapter, it was correctly understood by Forgues that logical analysis was the most valuable and most distinctive characteristic of Poe’s stories, whereas Baudelaire, already having limited Poe’s theory of unity to his views on poetry, put a lot less emphasis on the importance of logic in Poe’s stories. The fact that detective stories did not really exist in France may explain Baudelaire’s lack of interest in this side of Poe, but his preference may very well be simply a matter of taste, and should then be ascribed to Baudelaire’s personal project, which was more focused on the sensational and morbid side of Poe. Again, the analyses of the translations that will follow will uncover any traces of this preference in the target texts.

A few more structural novelties characterised the tales of ratiocination. As Buranelli points out, Poe was also the one to “set the pattern of getting the detective to solve more than one puzzle” (Buranelli 1977: 84). Detective Dupin appears in three stories, and refers, in one of them, to the mystery he had already solved in a previous story. Another innovation lay in the way in which Poe achieved his “air” of method, which was to rely on a particular kind of narrator who witnesses the activities of the detective in order to highlight the perspicacity of the detective’s analysis. Matthews explains:

By this seemingly simple device Poe doubled the effectiveness of his work, because this unobservant and unimaginative narrator of the unravelling of a tangled skein by an observant and imaginative analyst naturally recorded his own admiration and astonishment as the wonder was wrought before his eyes, so that the admiration and astonishment were transmitted directly and suggestively to the readers of the narrative. (Matthews 1966 [1909]: 89)

In less syntactically dense terms, the device of the “transmitting narrator,” as Matthews calls it (*ibid.*), is what makes Dupin so effective: not only is the narrative fully “thetical” in the tales of ratiocination, the differences between the detective’s and the narrator’s manners of reasoning also make the detective appear even more intelligent. Buranelli adds the point –well understood by Poe himself – that the device of a rather dull-witted narrator also helped to make the reader, who receives the same clues as the detective, feel better about his own analytical skills (Buranelli 1977: 84). Furthermore, the position and nature of Poe’s admiring narrator is what causes the reader to confuse the narrator-witness and the author himself, a mistake which one has already seen Jules Verne make, and which so many other Poe critics were to make after him. The device of the transmitting narrator was taken over at the end of the century by Conan Doyle, in whose stories Dr. Watson plays the same role of observer and significantly less perspicacious witness to Sherlock Holmes’ investigations.

As far as the state of French literature as a target system is concerned, all this indicates that when Poe’s tales of ratiocination reached France, nothing of the

kind existed, and they were a completely new addition to the literary system. This would entail that there were no rules as to what these stories had to correspond to, which implies that there were no norms governing the literary canon which the translations had to obey to. This is also one good reason to study the translation of a tale of ratiocination (see Chapter Eight), because the translations of such analytical stories may be most revealing of Baudelaire's stance and project, and his approach as a translator, since it is where he must have felt freest to rewrite the text according to his own tastes.

5.4.5. American Literature in Baudelaire's France

A last aspect of the literary horizon that should briefly be discussed here, is the appearance of American literature in France, and the following section should allow one to point to those writings with which Poe's could initially be identified as "American literature," and to determine what kind of American literature the public knew, and how it was received.

In France, at the time when Poe was discovered there, the general public's knowledge of American literature was mainly limited to the narratives of Fenimore Cooper, whose adventurous descriptions of the frontier had captivated the minds of readers and shaped their vision of America. The critics and authors in America were aware of this, and of the deprecating manner in which American literature (and culture) was generally treated in Europe. Evert Duyckinck, whom Poe had asked to write a piece about his spreading fame in Europe in 1845, seems to have been well-aware of that difficult situation, and also of the fact that Poe was already being plagiarised by unavowed translators. In an article entitled "An Author in Europe and America," he wrote:

The tale of the "Murders in the Morgue" [sic], is giving rise to various editorial perplexities, in Paris. It has been translated by the *feuilletons*, local personal allusions discovered and the American authorship denied. One of the journals says "If there turn out to be such an American author,

it will prove that America has at least one novelist besides Mr. Cooper” – and that, in France, is praise. (Duyckinck 1986 [1847]: 267-268)

A good view of what the French public may have known, opined and expected from American literature can be had through a contemporary of Baudelaire's, Jules Barbey d'Aurevilly. As Natta recounts, Barbey d'Aurevilly's acquaintance with Baudelaire affected his views on the subject of Poe, and though his first essays reveal the influence of Baudelaire's image of Poe, that aspect did change in subsequent writings as his friendship with Baudelaire waned (Natta 1990: 1-27). In 1853, Barbey d'Aurevilly, who is then still calling Poe “l'Hoffmann de l'Amérique” (Barbey d'Aurevilly 1990 [1853]: 32), mentions only one other American author: Harriet Beecher-Stowe. In the next essay he wrote on Poe, Barbey d'Aurevilly gives the full picture of French attitudes to American literature:

Malgré ses prétentions à la jeunesse, l'Amérique, cette fille de l'Europe, est née vieille comme tous les enfants de vieillards, et elle a les épuisements spirituels de sa mère. Littéralement, c'est une grande impuissante. Quelques grands noms, contestables d'ailleurs, ne constituent pas cet ensemble d'inventions, de traditions et de parentés intellectuelles qu'on appelle une littérature, et encore, parmi ces grands noms (si on excepte Fennimore Cooper, qui a cueilli la virginité de la Nature américaine), tous les écrivains de ce pays vivent sur le fond commun des littératures de l'Europe. (Barbey d'Aurevilly 1990 [1856] 46-47)

Pichois and Milner confirm the picture of an American literature which, until the 1850s, was not even considered as an independent literature at all: first, they state that “la littérature américaine n'est pas alors distinguée de l'anglaise” (Milner & Pichois 1996: 65) and then:

Les Etats-Unis, que Toqueville proposait à l'admiration de la France comme symbole de la liberté et de la démocratie (*De la démocratie en Amérique*, 1835, complété en 1840), font reconnaître leur littérature comme autochtone à partir de 1850: Emerson, Longfellow, Melville, commencent à être traduits. Le grand succès, ce sont les traductions en 1852-1853 d'*Uncle Tom's Cabin*, de Mrs. Beecher-Stowe. La grande révélation est celle d'Edgar Poe, dont le nom est un peu connu avant 1848. (Milner and Pichois 1996: 69)

For the majority of French readers around 1850, then, American literature did not really exist as an independent body, and names like Washington Irving and Brockden Brown were only known to Anglophone readers. The people of the *Revue britannique* and the *Quotidienne*, such as Amédée Pichot and Emile Forgues, probably constituted the only kind of public readers (i.e. critics) with access to these materials, and with a much larger knowledge of American literature and its European background, English literature. However, as the force of Baudelaire's impact immediately took over and made Poe an exclusively Baudelairean and therefore French matter, Poe was isolated from his own background, and absorbed in the realm of the French fantastic story. Baudelaire's personal appropriation of him thus immediately made Poe more French than American. The arrival of Poe's work, in any case, can be said to be marked by the nearly complete absence of American literature, and therefore, on a specifically literary level, of any particular expectations as to what American literature was supposed to be like. The translations were thus, at least as far as their national background is concerned, ungoverned by any literary expectations.

5.5. Conclusions

The literary horizon that existed in France when Poe's work arrived there around the 1850s contained a number of domains which entailed that French readers were more or less "ready" to receive Poe's work, while at the same time being in a state that made Poe's arrival an important innovating addition to French literature. French readers were already used to reading short stories, and even to associating them with fantastic literature, but they had never read them in such efficient and precise applications. Poe's theory of unity and effect were a novelty in French literature, though Baudelaire's appropriation of these ideas meant that Poe would not really be credited for them until much later – and this in itself is a symptom of Baudelaire's project of appropriation. As far as fantastic literature was concerned, the arrival of Poe's stories caused a revival of the genre and a new appreciation of the grotesque and the arabesque. Poe's science fiction and detective stories were also a completely new genre, and no norms existed in French literature which

would have affected their reception by the French reading public. The same can be said about the French readers' expectations with regards to American literature in general, since this literature was hardly recognised as an independent system, and only anglophile readers knew any other American authors besides J.F. Cooper.

Baudelaire's project for the translations is expressed in his biographical essays on Poe, which functioned as preface to his collection of translations. The Poe whom Baudelaire perceived and portrayed there was a drinking writer and an accidental genius, who was at his best when writing morbid horror. Moreover, Baudelaire isolated Poe from his national background, and turned his protégé into a mirror of himself. The result of this appropriation for the French reading of Poe's work was that horror and psychological turmoil became the distinctive characteristics of Poe's writing, whereas the first essay on Poe by Emile Forgues had especially praised its logical and analytical qualities. The translations should therefore be investigated for the traces which they may bear of this project of personal appropriation, and the selection of "The Fall of the House of Usher," a fantastic tale which Poe counted among his arabesques, and "The Gold Bug," a tale of ratiocination, is a logical consequence of these preliminary investigations into Baudelaire's project and stance. The former will allow one to pay specific attention to the way in which the "fantastic" aspects of the story are translated, whereas in the analysis of "Le scarabée d'or" one can focus on Baudelaire's understanding of the analytical side of Poe, i.e. the underlying logic of the story.

The fact that Baudelaire had no explicit translation philosophy, as indicated earlier, of course does not necessarily indicate that he did not have a consistent translation approach – and neither would his having had one, since, as was established in Chapter Two and Three, all para-text should be taken sceptically, and should be verified against the texts of the translations to which it refers. Having now pinned down a maximum amount of data which can explain certain decisions in the translations to be analysed in Chapters Seven and Eight, both on the level of stance (i.e. literary translation in general), of project (the translation of

Poe's short fiction), and of literary horizon (i.e. the texts in French literature with which Poe's short fiction could "interact"), the point at which the actual analyses can be carried out, has nearly arrived. What still remains to be done is to establish the state of the theory and practice in translation in France at the time when Baudelaire was translating Poe, and to place what is already known about his position, stance and project within the French "translational horizon."

Chapter Six: Baudelaire's Translational Horizon

6.1. Introduction

It is now time to discuss the context in which Baudelaire's translation project was formed, in order to measure how much of that project coincided with the translation theory and practice that existed in France at that time, and also in order to draw up the background against which Baudelaire's stance as a translator, which will be deduced from the actual analyses of his work (Chapters Seven and Eight) can be defined. This chapter will therefore examine where French translation theory stood around the time when Baudelaire began working on the translations of Poe's short fiction, what the reigning opinions were, what the market (i.e. the publishers, critics and readers) expected and what was actually being done in translation. In the second part of this chapter, the latter question will be treated more specifically with regards to the translation of Poe's stories, and a brief commentary will be given on the work of those translators who, before and during Baudelaire's work on Poe, were also translating Poe's short fiction.

6.2. The French Translational Horizon

6.2.1. Translation Theory around the 1800s

By the time Baudelaire began his translations of Poe, France had left far behind it the period of the *Belles Infidèles*, the eighteenth-century fashion of adapting classical works to the domestic taste and scenery, and associated especially with the name of Nicolas d'Ablancourt. The second half of the eighteenth century had seen some important treatises on translation, often in the form of autographic prefaces to translations in verse, either of classical texts or of more recent foreign "classics." Among these one finds Jacques Delille's preface to his translation of Virgil's *Georgics*, Pierre le Tourneur's to his translation of Young's *Night Thoughts*, Antoine Prévost's preface to his translation of Richardson's *Pamela*, and Voltaire's preface to his translation of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (Lefevere

1992b: 37-40). All these texts constitute, to a degree, a first move away from the habits that had reigned in translation in the eighteenth century, and among which an extraordinary fluency had been defended as a way to please the reading public – because to please had so far been the main goal of translation, as d’Ablancourt’s metaphorical counsel testifies:

Different times do not just require different words, but also different thoughts, and ambassadors usually dress in the fashion of the country they are sent to, so as not to appear ridiculous in the eyes of the people they try to please. (d’Ablancourt 1992b [1709]: 36)

Instead of dressing foreigners in local clothes, however, the early Romantic age brought an increasing interest in the foreignness of imported texts, and d’Ablancourt’s adaptations were replaced by translations that claimed a certain degree of “fidelity,” which in its weakest form signified a faithfulness to the original “spirit” of the work. With “fidelity,” Jacques Delille, for instance, seems to be referring to a varying type of equivalence, and requires the translator to oscillate between two opposite poles:

Que fait donc le traducteur habile? Il étudie le caractère des deux langues. Quand leurs génies se rapprochent, il est fidèle; quand ils s’éloignent, il remplit l’intervalle par un équivalent, qui, en conservant à sa langue tous ses droits, s’écarte le moins possible du génie de l’auteur. (Delille 1990 [1770]: 123)

Though the details differ, many of the treatises written between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century develop a stance which proposes strategies that are no longer aimed at pleasing the reader, but at better maintaining the original author’s intention and the text’s stylistic effects. Delille, for instance, points to the importance of respecting the genre of the work, and of reproducing the stylistic effects of the original, which he regarded as the foremost duty of the translator (Delille 1990 [1770]: 123). On this point he is in agreement with Voltaire, who called his own translation of *Julius Caesar* an “exact” translation for the following reasons:

I put into prose what is prose in Shakespeare's tragedy and used blank verse where Shakespeare uses it. What is lowly and familiar has been translated in the same way. I have tried to soar with the author where he soars and I have taken great care not to add or take away anything where he is turgid or bombastic. (Voltaire 1992b [1785]: 40)

The translators' primordial occupation, then, is to reproduce as "faithfully" as possible what they have found in the original. One should bear in mind, however, that around the turn of the century, and even up to the eighteen fifties, there were multifarious interpretations of the concept of fidelity in translation, and, as Lefevere also warns, "fidelity" should therefore be understood in that context as a multivalent criterion:

"Fidelity" in translation can (therefore) be shown to be not just, or even not primarily, a matter of matching on the linguistic level.
(Lefevere 1992b: 35)

For the critics fidelity did not meet any established criteria either, and beyond demanding that the translator should know both the source and target language well, neither critics nor readers worried too much with referring to the original to assess the degree of equivalence between source and target texts. This meant that the translator could *claim* to have been faithful, but that this claim was rarely verified through a comparison with the original text. A good example of this is Etienne-Augustin de Wailly's review, published in 1803, of E.T. Ourry's translation of Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*. When de Wailly (not to be confused with the upcoming Poe translator Léon de Wailly) judges this translation, he does not compare it to the original text, but to another French text written in the same genre (in D'Hulst 1990: 187-192).

Besides having poetical reasons for not judging the original as a relevant part of the exchange, the critics also had another, more substantial reason not to recur to the source text too often:

Bien des critiques s'arrogeaient le droit de louer ou de condamner les traductions sans recourir à l'original. Le contraire eût été surprenant de la part d'une société qui ignorait les langues étrangères. (Lambert 1975: 400)

Still, in spite of this ignorance, and possibly because of the continued “marginalization” of the original text by the critics, the beginning of the nineteenth century was marked by an improvement of the status of the translator, because the early Romantics saw him as an important contributor to the enrichment and growth of the national literature. The ideas of Walter Benjamin on this subject are a reminder, though only to a certain extent, of what one finds in Delille, Mme de Staël, and de Wailly. The translator is there seen to enlarge and aggrandize both the national language and literary system, and translation becomes an ennobling activity: “Il n’y a pas de plus éminent service à rendre à la littérature, que de transporter d’une langue à l’autre les chefs-d’œuvre de l’esprit humain,” wrote Mme de Staël (de Staël 1990 [1816]: 86). Delille also elaborates on this subject, and from the following extract it can be deduced that, though superficially similar, in its foundations this *doxa* was different from Benjamin’s:

J’ai toujours regardé les traductions comme un des meilleurs moyens d’enrichir une langue ... elles transportent dans la langue une foule de tours, d’images, d’expressions, qui paraissent éloignés de son génie, mais qui, en s’approchant par le secours de l’analogie, quelquefois s’annonçant comme le seul mot, la seule expression, la seule image propre, sont soufferts d’abord, et bientôt adoptés. (Delille 1990 [1770]: 120)

The divergence between Delille (and his contemporaries), and Benjamin, lies in the fact that Benjamin conceived of a mutual exchange in the coming together of two languages through translation, whereas the eighteenth-century authors were referring to a one-way transfer, from the source into the target language, with the national language being the sole beneficiary of the linguistic and literary exchange. In Delille and de Staël’s time, then, translation as enrichment was a one-way street.

6.2.2. A Rift in the Horizon

The possibility for enriching the national language and literature also depended on the kind of literature the translator was translating from, and it was the already

extant division within the literary system itself, which was divided into “low” and “high” literature, that led to a similar rift in the translational horizon. This phenomenon was studied in the 1980s by a group of Leuven scholars, among whom Lambert and D’Hulst, who analysed the state of the French translational horizon around and right up to the time when Baudelaire’s first translations appeared in the magazines – though neither mention Baudelaire’s case (see Lambert 1975, Lambert et al. 1985, and D’Hulst 1990). The authors show that the norms by which most translators abided in France around the eighteen-fifties followed the genre division that existed in the literary system, in the sense that, as Salama-Carr puts it, “the choice of translation strategy depended on whether the source text was a classical or a recent work” (Salama-Carr 1998: 413). In a more precise explanation than this statement, Lambert et al. explain that:

The translator of Virgil or Sophocles had at his disposal a set of models and rules which he found it hard to ignore. He remembered the verse forms and outlines of Delille or his predecessors which his respect for tradition forbade him to violate. In contrast, the translator of, say, E.Th. Hoffmann hardly imagined that reading a German writer in French could be a real problem, and was not worried by genre constraints or stylistic principles, even if he unwillingly fell victim to them. (Lambert et al. 1985: 156)

This division in translation norms meant that translators of recent prose works, especially English-language prose, and even more so American prose, were pretty much free to do as they liked – though it should be immediately added that it was a time when the practice of certain famous translators could very quickly become the norm. Still, as Lambert affirms, “the translation of recent prose works could yield a great variety of results, without giving offence to either critic or publisher” (Lambert et al. 1985: 157).

Though the discussion will here be limited to prose translation, one nineteenth-century verse translation should be noted, because it illustrates precisely that the variety and freedom in translation strategies could even touch the more norm-governed field of poetry, and could concern source texts that were rather less “recent” than those Lambert has in mind. Supposedly one had to have the literary reputation of a Chateaubriand to be allowed to publish the extraordinary and

paradoxical translation this poet made of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, a translation which came out in 1836. This translation was preceded by a very appropriate piece of para-text, an "Avertissement," which not only explained why the poet had wanted to become a translator, but also gave reasons for the high degree of literalism which marked the translation, and of which the poet-translator had correctly assumed that it would upset the majority of his readers. The translation is indeed innovative enough for D'Hulst to state about it that:

... cette traduction aspire à créer une nouvelle langue traductrice: archaïsmes, néologismes, calques, attestent un souci de littéralité qui a rebuté une fraction importante des lecteurs contemporains.
(D'Hulst 1990: 167)

Such a translation was certainly an exception in the 1830s and it remains an isolated case in that period of verse translation. One is also led to wonder whether its mere existence may have inspired Baudelaire, who began translating only a decade later, to push his own literalism as far as he did.

6.2.3. 1830: A Time of Transition and Absence of Norms

Around the 1830s a change can also be observed in the kind of authors who took up translation. As Lambert et al. indicate :

Between 1800 and 1830 translation was a natural field of interest among poets as well. What is more, their translations are an integral part of their œuvre, in which literature and translation (or "adaptation") imperceptibly merge. ... After 1830, it was rather the second-rate or marginal innovating poets, i.e. the least mentioned but nevertheless original ones, who produced translations. (Lambert 1985 et al.: 161-162)

Though Lambert refers to them as "marginal" literary figures, some of these translators (e.g. Gérard de Nerval) were to become important names in French literature. This was a process which worked both ways, in the sense that the interest and prestige of the activity of translation was in turn renewed by the success that their translations bestowed on these suddenly no longer marginal

literary figures. Translation thus became the activity by which the self-fulfilling prophecy of a poet or an author's fame could be enacted through the prestige and the innovative nature of the work they chose to translate, and with which they initially propped up their literary careers. For D'Hulst, de Vigny and Deschamps' translation of *Romeo and Juliet*, published around 1830, constituted such a stage in their careers (D'Hulst 1990: 91-92).

Around the 1830s, then, translation continued to be seen as an enriching activity in more ways than one, and those who thought that French literature needed a new impetus resorted to it to find inspiration or a good start. Lambert claims that there is no clear division between a before and after 1830, and that the rift between "high" and "low" literature continued to be reflected in the translation strategies that were applied. The new translators, whether or not they were literary figures or experienced translators themselves, did not adopt a radically new school in translation, and Delille's precepts were still frequently applied in their work. This is the reason why Lambert, though signalling change, can at the same time state that "L'année 1830 ne semble pas marquer une rupture, mais un glissement" (Lambert 1975: 410).

That the 1830s constituted a transitional period can also be deduced from the practices of the translators and poet-translators who were working during the late 1840s and 1850s. Gérard de Nerval, for instance, had an almost regressive translation stance. Indeed, concerning his omissions in his translations of Goethe and Schiller, Nerval stated that "peu d'ouvrages étrangères peuvent, sans coupures, satisfaire le goût du lecteur français" (quoted in Lambert 1975: 399) – thus confirming that the foreign prose he was translating was better read in a fluent than a literal translation. And Alfred de Vigny, on his translation of *Othello*, wrote in 1830:

J'ai donc décidé de rendre l'esprit, et non la lettre. Cela n'a pas été compris par tout le monde, je l'avais prévu; pour les uns, ceux qui ignorent l'anglais, j'ai été trop littéral; pour les autres, ceux qui le savent, je ne l'ai pas été assez. (de Vigny 1990 [1830]: 95)

Again, de Vigny's words show that the norms were extremely varied and much up to the personal taste of the translator, and that it was difficult, even for poet-translators, to estimate, let alone fulfil, the French readers' expectations as far as translations were concerned. Prose translation in particular lacked explicit rules, and the kind of literalism that Baudelaire claimed to adopt was not always the strategy preferred by his predecessors and contemporaries. Actually, around the 1830s many translators were deploying a mix of strategies:

Loève-Veimars, Defauconpret, Pichot and Montémont prove at times to be very inconsistent, but often also very scrupulous. The reason, as suggested above, is that narrative prose itself escaped a familiar and restrictive codification. The diversity in the methods applied by the translators corresponds with a diversity, one might even say a hierarchy, in the relations between the genres. (Lambert et al. 1985: 158)

The translators' stance around the mid-nineteenth century thus continued to be determined not only by their personal tastes, but by the genre divisions which also ran through the literary system itself.

6.2.4. Prose Translators, "Tutors," and Critics after 1830

Interestingly, Delille's old requirement, that the translator should know both the source and target language fluently, continued to be frequently ignored, and the status of the original text as source text was also far from secure:

Philarète Chasles, Xavier Marmier, Nerval même devinaient plutôt qu'ils ne comprenaient réellement la langue allemande. ... Beaucoup de leurs collègues se contentaient de remanier des versions antérieures, tel Alexandre Dumas traduisant Schiller d'après Brante et non d'après l'original. (Lambert 1975: 402)

The phenomenon of writing a translation based on a previous translation was frequent enough to have a bearing on the Poe translations, since at least one of Baudelaire's rival translators, as will be shown, had recourse to this type of strategy. Moreover, though there were now, at least for German and English literature, specialized magazines in which the increasing amount of translated

prose was being published, and though the interest in foreign literature had grown considerably, the critics had not yet begun to remark on the translation techniques that were being deployed, for the same reasons as before:

Même des périodiques spécialisés, telles que la *Revue germanique* et la *Revue britannique*, insistent alors rarement sur la distance entre le vrai Hoffmann ou le vrai Walter Scott et celui que lisent les Français.
(Lambert 1975: 400)

This situation was also sustained by the fact that translation in itself was simply not part of the critics' or readers' interests. This is illustrated by the now familiar example of Loève-Weimars' translations of Hoffmann, in which case the translator of an unknown foreign prose writer was lauded not for the quality of his translation, but for the act of introducing something that constituted an innovation and an enrichment of French literature. However, the following comments, written only a decade before Baudelaire began his translations, are significant because they show that this type of project of *translatio* was not appreciated by all:

Vous devenez l'interprète des grands écrivains étrangers, vous accolez votre nom à celui de Walter Scott, de Goethe, de Byron, de Schiller, vous leur servez d'introducteur dans le monde littéraire français, en laissant sous-entendre que, grâce à votre savoir-faire, ces génies un peu incultes peuvent désormais se présenter dans la bonne société. Cependant la presse qui vous croit sur parole, n'ayant guère le temps d'aller voir si vous avez dit vrai, vous loue et vous exalte, le public qui croit à la presse vous achète et vous lit, et de croyance en croyance vous arrivez à croire vous-même que vous êtes un excellent traducteur, puisque tout le monde le répète.
(Anonymous 1990 [1836]: 223)³⁸

These anonymous comments show that some people were aware of the general confusion between "a good translation" and "an interesting addition to the literary system," and of the way in which mediocre or simply marginal authors were building their literary status on the basis of the association of their name with a

³⁸ By mentioning the names of the source authors, the author is obviously referring to particular translators. Goethe and Schiller had been translated by (among others) Mme de Staël, Albert Stapfer and Gérard de Nerval, Byron by Amédée Pichot, and Walter Scott by Charles-Auguste Defauconpret and Albert Montémont (D'Hulst 1990: 226n). In Chapter Eight, Pichot may also have had a hand in Defauconpret's translation of Scott.

foreign author's œuvre. The process of introducing a foreign author thus served the translator's own literary reputation in the first place – independently of the quality of the translation. Again, the author of these comments also states that criticism on translation was very rarely founded on the critic's reference to the source text.

This section should be concluded, then, with a few comments on how the critics reviewed and received Baudelaire's "case" as a translator. Baudelaire was no different from the translators mentioned in this section in that firstly, he fitted into the frame of the translator who introduced a new and innovating author into the national literary system, and thus enhanced his own literary status. Secondly, no critic ever commented seriously on the quality of the translations with reference to the source text – not one of the numerous reviews that appeared in Baudelaire's days, and which Lemonnier uses as evidence for the immediate success of the translations, and for their "evident" appropriateness (see Lemonnier 1928: 156-163), mentions source text materials. In fact, the critics' comments, both in the nineteenth and twentieth century, show that many among them were seduced by the personal side of the story, by the biographical essays which Baudelaire wrote to better "present" his author to the French, by the expressed feeling of "brotherhood" which Baudelaire experienced, by his great admiration of Poe, and at a later stage, by the great influence the latter's work was seen to have both on Baudelaire and on French literature.

As far as Baudelaire's translations go, Lemonnier, as was just indicated, filled over six pages of his study with the comments that were made on the translations around 1856 and after. These mainly criticize what was perceived as Baudelaire's tendency to "neologise," which, as the second part of this chapter will begin to reveal, was the result of the literal translation strategy which he announces as a part of his project in the previous chapter. Some examples from the reviews may illustrate the expectations of the critics in those days. Lemonnier's sources for these comments are indicated in footnotes:

“Cette traduction, à notre avis,” dit quelqu’un, “a le défaut d’exagérer ce qui est bas et de transposer, pour ainsi dire, d’un ou deux tons dans le familier.”³⁹ Pontmartin souligne les “paillettes néologiques”⁴⁰ du style de Baudelaire ... Presque tous les critiques, en somme, reprochent à Baudelaire de ne pas lutter contre cette tentation qui “le pousse quelquefois au néologisme; et loin de faire effort pour s’arrêter sur cette pente, il s’y laisse aller volontiers.”⁴¹ (Lemonnier 1828: 156-157)

The closeness of the translations would thus have served Baudelaire in creating a “new” idiom, and constituted the main factor in creating a foreignising effect, an effect which was mostly appreciated, and the majority of reviewers did praise Baudelaire’s translations. Paradoxically, however, these positive reviews particularly lauded the *fluency* of the translations:

“Au lieu d’être mate et passive comme la copie d’un secrétaire polyglotte,”⁴² la version de Baudelaire a “le grand mérite de se lire comme un ouvrage original;”⁴³ elle se compose de “traductions tellement excellentes qu’elles semblent être des œuvres originales”⁴⁴ ... Et même, s’il faut en croire Théophile Gautier, cette traduction serait si parfaite dans l’expression que “la pensée de l’auteur gagne à passer d’un idiome dans un autre.”⁴⁵ (Lemonnier 1928: 159-160)

It becomes clear, then, that the critics were not concerned with the original Poe when they were praising the quality of the Baudelaire translations. The main criterion for these reviewers, all writing in and after the 1850s, was still the fluency of the texts they had read.

To conclude this general picture of the translational horizon, one can state that as far as prose translation was concerned, the 1830s did see a greater respect for the original text, and a stronger desire to maintain the effects and intentions that the original author had put there. The reviews cited above show that by the 1850s there was generally a much greater interest in maintaining the foreignness of the

³⁹ “*Revue Contemporaine*, 15 juillet 1857, p. 503 note 1” (Lemonnier 1928: 156).

⁴⁰ “*L’Assemblée Nationale*, 12 avril 1856” (Lemonnier 1928: 156).

⁴¹ “*Revue Contemporaine*, 15 Juillet 1856” (Lemonnier 1928: 157).

⁴² “*L’Assemblée Nationale*, 12 avril 1856” (Lemonnier 1928: 159).

⁴³ “*Revue Contemporaine*, 15 juillet 1857, p. 503 note 1” (Lemonnier 1928: 159).

⁴⁴ “*Le Moniteur Universel*, 9 septembre 1867” (Lemonnier 1928: 159).

⁴⁵ “*Le Moniteur Universel*, 9 septembre 1867” (Lemonnier 1928: 160).

source text than had been shown before, and literalism was slowly becoming a criterion for a “faithful” prose translation. However, although this change could be observed in some translations, the fact that prose writing as a genre in itself was not yet subject to any specific rules meant that the translations of prose narratives were still varied and could contain both literal and free strategies, and since the critics hardly ever referred to the original text in order to assess the quality of the translation, the methods deployed were never effectively questioned.

The 1830s had also seen the arrival of a number of “traducteurs-tuteurs,” that is to say authors like Loève-Veimars whose literary reputation was largely built on having translated and introduced a new and innovating author into the French literary system. Baudelaire’s immediate infatuation with Poe, his desire to be “Poe’s Loève-Veimars” and the identification he managed to establish between himself and “his” author, both in his own mind and in those of the readers, were not only a matter of personal taste and recognition, but also a matter of following what was then a fashionable path to literary fame. His project for the Poe translations, to translate as literally as possible, was, on the other hand, also a sign of his keeping pace with the customs of his time.

6.3. Baudelaire’s Predecessors and Contemporary Poe Translators

Baudelaire’s translations must also be assessed in comparison with the other translations of Poe’s work that came out before or during his time. Though this has already been done by Léon Lemonnier, the problem with this 1928 study (of which Lemonnier’s later preface to his 1961 and 1962 editions of Baudelaire’s translations are very literal summaries) is that he only compares Baudelaire and his predecessors and contemporaries’ work in a very sketchy manner. That is to say, Lemonnier discusses Baudelaire’s rivals’ work in some detail, but does not compare the extracts he examines thereof with Baudelaire’s corresponding texts. It is only in the chapter where he assesses the Baudelaire translations that

Lemonnier, in four small extracts, draws the comparison with four rival translators' work (Lemonnier 1928: 176-177, 178, 179 and 181).

The nature of the present study, however, requires a more profound comparative examination between Baudelaire's work and that of at least one of his rivals. Moreover, keeping in mind Berman's opinions on the subject, it was necessary, in order to assess the Baudelaire translations against the background of their "translational horizon," to base oneself on a whole story, instead of selecting a few extracts here and there from different stories and different translators for such a purpose. The choice for this more detailed examination has fallen on a translation by Amédée Pichot, because it is likely to reveal how the work of an experienced and prolific translator may have differed from Baudelaire's. Amédée Pichot (pseudonym Alphonse Borghers) wrote, in 1853, a small volume entitled the *Nouvelles choisies d'Edgard Poë* (sic). The book was published by the *Bibliothèque des Chemins de Fer*, and contains translations of "The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaal" and "The Gold Bug." The latter of these two translations will be taken up in a detailed comparison with Baudelaire's translation of the same story, in Chapter Eight.

Meanwhile, it did seem useful to briefly introduce and comment on a few extracts of other preceding and contemporary translations, which feature in Lemonnier's 1928 work, and to examine these in comparison with Baudelaire's translations. This should help form a preliminary picture, not only of what the nineteenth-century reader was beginning to expect from a translation of an American text, but more specifically what the readers had already gotten used to in Poe translation. It should also, at a later stage, help us to determine more confidently how Baudelaire's work filled in these expectations. The reader, in the pages that follow, may also be reminded of Lemonnier's bias in his approach to the Baudelaire translations – Lemonnier's evaluations of the others' work does not always profit from the same positive attitude that welcomed Baudelaire's.

6.3.1. Unavowed Translations of Poe

Baudelaire can indeed be described as a re-translator, since he had at least six predecessors in translating Poe, some of whom also became his contemporaries. The first translation of a Poe story to appear in France was an unavowed translation of “William Wilson,” which came out in 1844 and is described by Richard as an “adaptation très libre de l’original” (Richard 1989: 1583). It has been attributed to Gustave Brunet, whose identity was unknown to Lemonnier when he wrote his 1928 study. Again according to Richard, Gustave Brunet also adapted and published under his own name “Un meurtre sans exemple dans les fastes de la justice,” another “adaptation très libre” of “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” published in *La quotidienne* in 1845 (Richard 1989: 1583). An anonymous translation, which Richard simply lists without further comment, also came out in the *Magazine pittoresque*, which published in August 1845 a version of “The Purloined Letter” under the title “Une lettre volée” (Richard 1989: 1583).

6.3.2. Emile Daurand Forgues (“Old Nick”)

Emile Forgues is already known to the reader from the discussion of his 1846 essay on Poe (see Chapter Five), and Lemonnier tells us that “Emile Daurand Forgues était un personnage très fort répandu. Sous le pseudonyme anglais d’Old Nick, sous la signature anglomane d’Emile D. Forgues, il collaborait à plusieurs journaux ou revues” (Lemonnier 1928: 22). Forgues was not a neophyte translator, having already done translations of British and American literature:

Parmi celles-ci on peut citer “Le vicair de Wakefield” de Goldsmith, “La Lettre rouge” et “La Maison aux sept pignons” de Hawthorne, et surtout “La Case de l’oncle Tom,” de Mrs. Beecher-Stowe, qui eut un gros succès. (Lemonnier 1928: 23)

Forgues’ first translation of a Poe story was his rendering of “A Descent into the Maelström,” which he translated as “Une Descente au Maelström” and published in the *Revue britannique* in September 1846 (Richard 1989: 1583). Of this

translation Lemonnier says that it is too domesticating, and that Forgues takes too many liberties in embellishing the text:

... Forgues oublie que le traducteur n'est pas collaborateur; loin de porter sur le texte des mains pieuses, il l'orne et l'enjolive à plaisir.
(Lemonnier 1928: 25)

If one is to believe Lemonnier, Forgues added and omitted things in his translation, which merely shows him following the “norms” that were extant at the time: Poe’s short stories being precisely the kind of foreign prose that was not yet subject to any explicit norms, Forgues was free to vary his translation strategies from strict literalism to adaptation, without either of those techniques being considered, in *his* time, too much of a deviation. The following comments from Forgues, made with reference to a different translation, bear out this position – and also bear out the picture of the translational horizon as painted in the first part of this chapter:

Forgues, en tout cas, avait coutume de se faire l'interprète de certaines œuvres originales anglaises. “Je les ai,” assurait-il, “arrangées suivant un système de traduction – d'imitation si l'on veut – que j'estime être le meilleur quand il ne s'agit pas d'un chef d'œuvre de premier ordre.”
(Lemonnier 1928: 31)

Forgues also translated, like Pichot, “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” which he entitled “Une sanglante énigme” and which was published in *Le commerce* in October 1846 (Richard 1989: 1583). In this story Forgues placed the scene in Baltimore, thus applying an idea of fidelity that brings that concept very close to a fluent strategy. The desire here was to avoid retaining names and places which Forgues thought were too familiar for the Parisian readers not to be bothered by Poe’s fictitious names. Forgues’ justification for this strategy featured in his 1846 essay and is given here:

Nous regrettons seulement que le conteur étranger [i.e. Poe] ait cru en augmenter l'intérêt en choisissant Paris, dont il n'a pas la moindre idée, et notre société actuelle, fort mal connue aux Etats-Unis, pour y placer ses ingénieuses hypothèses. Son dessein, sans aucun doute, était d'augmenter

par là, aux yeux de ses compatriotes, la vraisemblance de ces petits drames ... Tel détail, inacceptable dans un récit dont la scène se serait passée à Baltimore ou à Philadelphie, devenait admissible placée à deux mille lieues de là, et ne dérangeait plus la disposition volontairement crédule du lecteur américain. Le merveilleux, et même l'extraordinaire, ont besoin de perspective. (Forgues 1974 [1846]: 274)

The extracts which Lemonnier gives of Forgues' work as a translator reveal that Forgues was, indeed, at times a literal translator, but also, at times, a free translator who added his own details. Interestingly, parts of these additions seem to have originated from a desire to add a more morbid effect where there was none in the original. The following extract from Forgues' translation of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" indeed illustrates this. The extract is a part of the police report relating the details of the crime scene. Noticeably, although the report appears in a newspaper, there is none of the sensationalising techniques often found there, and the style is factual and dry indeed, more that of a police report than of a newspaper brief:

... where lay the corpse of the old lady, with her throat so entirely cut that, upon an attempt to raise her, the head fell off. (Mabbott 1978: 538)

On y trouva le cadavre de sa mère; quand on voulut le relever pour s'assurer qu'elle ne vivait plus, la tête, presque entièrement séparée du corps par une profonde blessure au cou, s'en détacha tout à fait et roula par terre. (Forgues quoted in Lemonnier 1928: 34)

For this sentence, Baudelaire's version is as follows:

Là gisait le cadavre de la vieille dame, avec la gorge si parfaitement coupée, que, quand on essaya de le relever, la tête se détacha du tronc. (Le Dantec 1951: 17)

In Forgues, two details are added: for "pour s'assurer qu'elle ne vivait plus," there is nothing in the source text, and Forgues also adds the picture of the head rolling over the floor, which indeed makes this passage more gory and sinister. Forgues also does not keep the original syntax, though the adverbial phrase "so entirely cut" could easily have been retained, witness Baudelaire's version. Forgues' two

additions here are deviations from the original field of discourse, because they make for a less factual and more sinister and sensational text. Here is another extract which gives a glimpse of Forgues' translation strategies:⁴⁶

Of Madame L'Esplanaye, no traces were here seen; but an unusual quantity of soot being observed in the fire-place, a search was made in the chimney, and (horrible to relate !), the corpse of the daughter, head downwards, was dragged therefrom; it having been thus forced up the narrow aperture for a considerable distance. The body was quite warm. (Mabbott 1978: 538)

De Mme de Lesplanaye aucune trace; mais ayant remarqué dans le foyer une quantité inusitée de suie, un des assistants s'avise de regarder par le tuyau de la cheminée et – chose terrible à raconter – on y trouve le corps de Mlle Camille, la tête en bas, et poussé dans cette étroite ouverture où de vigoureux efforts avaient dû être employés pour le faire pénétrer si avant. Ce corps était tiède. (Forgues quoted in Lemonnier 1928: 34)

On ne trouva aucune trace de madame l'Espanaye; mais on remarqua une quantité extraordinaire de suie dans le foyer; on fit une recherche dans la cheminée, et – chose horrible à dire! on en tira le corps de la demoiselle, la tête en bas, qui avait été introduit de force et poussé par l'étroite ouverture jusqu'à une distance assez considérable. Le corps était tout chaud. (Le Dantec 1951: 17)

Besides the changed spelling of the proper names and the changes in denomination of the (dead) protagonists, Forgues has added an agent ("un des assistants") for the discovery in the chimney. Baudelaire also adds agency on this occasion, though he limits himself to using the impersonal "on" – and thus makes a less significant divergence from the field of the police report than Forgues.

⁴⁶ Henceforth the terms *field*, *tenor* and *mode of discourse* will be used in the same way as they are employed both by House 1997 and in Hatim and Mason 1990. For House, the notion of register is made up of field, tenor and mode, and field here refers to "the topic, the content of the text" (House 1997: 108). In Hatim and Mason's words, "Field, or the reference to "what is going on" (i.e. the field of activity), is the kind of language use which reflects what Gregory and Carroll (1978) call "the purposive role," or the social function of the text (e.g. personal interchange, exposition, etc.)" (Hatim and Mason 1990: 48). Besides these "use-related" variations of register, Hatim and Mason's also take into account categories that vary according to the user. Field, tenor and mode are thus combined with "user-related" variations, which can be geographical, temporal, social, (non-) standard and idiolectal (see Hatim and Mason 1990: 39).

The next two changes however have consequences that reach beyond a change in register. Firstly, with Forgues' added relative clause *and* adverbial phrase of purpose, "où de vigoureux efforts avaient dû être employés pour," for "having thus been forced up," Forgues anticipates on the plot, already stating explicitly one of the clues of the riddle, before the detective has had a chance to do so.⁴⁷ Secondly, if the body was "quite warm," the murder would certainly have taken place later than with a body that is "tiède," which, in the case of a body, does not translate "quite warm." Though the pre-modifying adverb "quite" is here a downtoning intensifier for "warm," "tiède," which *Littre* defines as "entre le chaud et le froid (*Littre* 4: 6305), is really too cold, especially in the case of a dead body, to translate even a downgraded "warm." Moreover, Forgues has changed the tense of the two verb phrases "was made" and "was dragged" into the present, which heightens the immediacy of the events, and increases the difference in field of discourse between Forgues' and Poe's texts. Baudelaire, on the other hand, commits a serious error here, though his translation goes in the opposite direction: translating "tiède" by "tout chaud," Baudelaire could be taken to suggest that the body has been heated by its stay in the chimney, an intention which certainly was not part of Poe's plot. Baudelaire also retains the dragging out of the body, which Forgues omits.

Overall, then, Forgues is quite inconsistent with the register of the original, which here corresponds to the dry and factual tone of a police report, though Baudelaire's version also shows a few deficiencies on this level. Both translate the technical-sounding "aperture" into the more generic "ouverture," (whereas "orifice" was possible here, as this word's anatomical meaning comes second after its more general meaning of "ouverture plus ou moins étroite qui conduit à quelque cavité" (*Littre* 3: 4335) and "ouverture faisant communiquer une cavité naturelle ou artificielle avec l'extérieur" (*Trésor* 12: 635)). Both translators also add agency where the original has passives, though this tendency is stronger in Forgues than in Baudelaire. Generally speaking Baudelaire stays closer to the field and tenor of the crime report, with his choice of "introduit de force et

⁴⁷ The "murders" in the story were committed by an orang-utan, and it is the excessive force with which the body was shoved up into the chimney that provides a clue for Dupin.

poussée” for “forced up,” and his maintaining the more detached “a search” in “une recherche.”⁴⁸

In comparison, then, Baudelaire’s translation of this passage is slightly “closer” than Forgues’, a closeness marred by the fatal “tout chaud,” which affects the plot. Forgues’ strategies, on the other hand, were as varied as his times permitted, but their predominant characteristic appears to be fluency, which results in rather arbitrary decisions. This fluency strategy is realized by stepping from the “dry” register of the police report into a more lively and less detached rendering. Forgues’ deviation from the original register is far-reaching, and that makes him a less “modern” translator than Baudelaire. Still, as was just demonstrated, though the latter’s pledge to literalism was more scrupulously upheld, this was affected by crucial changes.

6.3.3. Isabelle Meunier

Isabelle Meunier’s translation of “The Black Cat” was the first Poe story that Baudelaire ever read, and it was probably thanks to Meunier’s translations that Poe’s name began to become known in 1847, since she published four of her translations that year. Madame Meunier published all her translations in *La démocratie pacifique*, where her husband Victor Meunier was editing: in January “Le chat noir” and “L’Assassinat de la rue Morgue” appeared, in July, “Le colloque d’Eiros et Charmion” and in September “Une descente au Maelström” (Richard 1989: 1584). Baudelaire said rather vaguely about Meunier’s texts that they were “traduits dans un excellent système de traduction” (Baudelaire 1974 [1852]: 287) – but Baudelaire may have wanted to be careful in his judgments of Meunier’s work, since the lady’s husband was a powerful person with influence in

⁴⁸ Tenor: “the nature of the participants, the addresser and the addressees, and the relationship between them in terms of social distance, as well as the “degree of emotional charge” in the relationship between addresser and addressee(s). Included here are the addresser’s temporal, geographical and social provenance as well as his intellectual, emotional or affective stance (his “personal viewpoint”) vis-à-vis the content he is portraying and the communicative task he is engaged in” (House 1997: 108-109). House thus includes what Hatim and Mason call “user related variations” in her concept of tenor (cf supra).

some of the magazines that were publishing grounds for Baudelaire (Lemonnier 1928: 42).

Madame Meunier was of English origin (born in Brighton in 1822) and though Lemonnier seems pretty satisfied with her skills as a translator, he points out that one of the major flaws in Meunier's work as Poe translator was her omission of certain passages or paragraphs. He describes her translation of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" in the following terms:

Le travail de Madame Meunier n'est pas sans défauts; elle pêche surtout par omission. Dans "l'Assassinat de la Rue Morgue," elle a, comme ses devanciers, écarté toute l'introduction; elle a encore, comme eux, essayé de franciser le récit, mais elle a procédé plutôt par suppressions que par modifications. (Lemonnier 1928: 43)

The extracts that feature in Lemonnier's study show, on the one hand, that Meunier indeed omitted certain passages, but also that for her translation of "The Descent into the Maëlstrom" she consulted Forgues' version, which she did not copy, though she maintained some of Forgues' interventions (Lemonnier 1928: 49-53). All in all however, Meunier seems to have achieved relatively literal or close translations, especially for her time, and even Lemonnier could still claim that she achieved an "exactitude qui, dans un grand nombre de cas, ne laisse rien à désirer" (Lemonnier 1928: 52). The following comparison of an extract from Meunier's "Une descente au Maelström" may help us to verify that opinion:

The rays of the moon seemed to search the very bottom of the profound gulf; but still I could make out nothing distinctly on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped, and over which there hung a magnificent rainbow, like that narrow and tottering bridge which Mussulmen say is the only pathway between Time and Eternity. This mist, or spray, was no doubt occasioned by the clashing of the great walls of the funnel, as they all met together at the bottom – but the yell that went up to the Heavens from out of that mist, I dare not attempt to describe. (Mabbott 1978: 591)

Les rayons de la lune semblaient pénétrer jusqu'aux profondeurs du gouffre; mais je ne pouvais rien voir distinctement, à cause d'une vapeur épaisse qui enveloppait tout, et au-dessus de laquelle était suspendu un

magnifique arc-en-ciel, semblable à ce point [sic] étroit et chancelant qui, disent les Musulmans, est le seul passage entre le temps et l'éternité. Cette vapeur, ou plutôt cette écume aérienne, était sans doute causée par le choc des grandes parois de l'entonnoir quand elles rencontraient le fond; mais quant au hurlement qui sortait de cette vapeur et s'élevait vers le ciel, je n'ose essayer de le décrire. (Meunier in Lemonnier 1928: 52)

Les rayons de la lune semblaient chercher le fin fond de l'immense gouffre; cependant, je ne pouvais rien distinguer nettement, à cause d'un épais brouillard qui enveloppait toutes choses, et sur lequel planait un magnifique arc-en-ciel, semblable à ce pont étroit et vacillant que les musulmans affirment être le seul passage entre le Temps et l'Eternité. Ce brouillard ou cette écume était sans doute occasionnée par le conflit des grands murs de l'entonnoir, quand ils se rencontraient et se brisaient au fond; – quant au hurlement qui montait de ce brouillard vers le ciel, je n'essaierai pas de le décrire. (Le Dantec 1951: 195-196)

Meunier's and Baudelaire's translations are, to say the least, very similar, though a few deviations can be pointed out in both. Meunier's "vapeur" for "mist" is not a very poetic choice, whereas Baudelaire's "brouillard" is the more obvious translation for "mist." "Profondeurs du gouffre" is also a more liberal translation for "the very bottom" which is, again, more closely translated by Baudelaire's "le fin fond." "Search" is also more closely translated by Baudelaire's "chercher" than by Meunier's "pénétrer." "Ecume aérienne," for "spray," seems to confirm the suspicion that Meunier's problem was not so much understanding the English vocabulary, but finding the adequate words in French.

However, even though Baudelaire's translation seems closer at first glance, this may be deceptive. Baudelaire makes several additions, omissions and changes, most of which are not found in Meunier. Firstly, as Meunier, he added agency for the mist, making it the agent of the active verb phrase "enveloppait." Secondly, the rainbow not only gets added agency, but "planait" instead of "hung," whereas in Meunier, it is more neutrally "suspendu." Thirdly, for Baudelaire, the funnel walls, which in the case of a Maelström supposedly consist of water, are in "conflit," whereas in Poe there is a "clashing," which is more closely translated by Meunier's "choc," which avoids the volition and abstractness which "conflit" could be taken to contain. Fourthly, where there is nothing in the original, Baudelaire adds the idea of the walls breaking ("se brisaient") as they "all met

together at the bottom,” which seems not only an unnecessary, but illogical addition in the case of a Maelström, as it is not a question of waves breaking on a beach, but of walls of water coming together. Fifthly, Baudelaire omits the ominous “dare not” in “I dare not attempt to describe,” translating it by a more airy “je n’essaierai pas de le décrire.” Sixthly, where Meunier, as Lemonnier also indicates, had managed to retain the rhythm of the sentence by keeping an identical syntax for the relative clause that appears in gapping position, “which the Mussulmen say,” this is changed into a more heavy relative clause with a complex verb phrase (“affirment être”) in Baudelaire’s version.

Anticipating again the observations that will be drawn from the analyses of Baudelaire’s translations, it can be concluded, from the small amount of material that is examined here, that Meunier’s translation strategies were not that much different from Baudelaire’s, and that in most places she translates as closely as her future rival would. What should be remembered, then, of this glimpse of Isabelle Meunier’s work is that, considering the fact that her translations *were* published, widely read and appreciated nearly ten years before Baudelaire’s first collection of translations came out, the nineteenth-century publishers and reading public – including Baudelaire – must have therefore found Meunier’s translations entirely acceptable – which in itself already shows that Baudelaire did not set a precedent in translation practice. More importantly, Meunier’s technique of close, literal translation apparently did not go against the expectations of her readers, who were also Baudelaire’s future readers. All in all then, though there were as yet no norms governing the translation of unknown American literature, the public who was interested in Poe had, from their first acquaintance with him, become accustomed to reading the type of relatively close translations which Baudelaire would also produce. In this light, Baudelaire’s project of literalism for the Poe translations cannot be considered an innovation, but simply constitutes a desire to stick to an unpronounced, yet well-established norm in the translation of Poe, and in prose translation in general.

6.3.4. Léon de Wailly

The next translator to be discussed here was both a predecessor and a contemporary of Baudelaire's. Léon de Wailly was an experienced translator, known for his translations of Lewis's *Monk*, of Fielding's *Tom Jones*, of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* and *Sentimental Journey*, and of a selection of works by Sir Walter Scott (Lemonnier 1928: 68). In other words, de Wailly was an experienced translator of "contemporary" or relatively recent Anglo-Saxon prose.

In his critique on extracts of de Wailly's translations, Lemonnier accuses de Wailly of excessive literalism on the one hand, and negligence on the other. The latter accusation is roused by certain omissions, but the extracts which Lemonnier cites do not always support the strength of his accusations. Moreover, Lemonnier himself indicates that de Wailly's translations were of varied quality: the humorous stories seem to suffer from many cuttings, but his translations of the analytical tales show that this translator had a keen interest in the "scientific" side of Poe, as these stories are translated with a lot more precision. Lemonnier indicates that de Wailly's best and most noted translation was the one he made of "The Facts in the Case of Mr. Valdemar" (Lemonnier 1928: 79), of which an extract can now be compared with Baudelaire's translation:

When they had gone, I spoke freely with M. Valdemar on the subject of his approaching dissolution, as well as, more particularly, of the experiment proposed. He still professed himself quite willing and even anxious to have it made, and urged me to commence it at once.
(Mabbott 1978: 1236)

Lorsqu'il furent partis, je parlai librement avec M. Valdemar sur sa fin prochaine, et, plus particulièrement, de l'expérience projetée. Il me répéta qu'il ne demandait pas mieux, et même qu'il désirait vivement qu'elle fût faite, et il me pressa de commencer sur le champ.
(de Wailly in Lemonnier 1928: 72)

Quand ils furent partis, je causai librement avec M. Valdemar de sa mort prochaine, et plus particulièrement de l'expérience que nous nous étions proposée. Il se montra toujours plein de bon vouloir; il témoigna même un vif désir de cette expérience et me pressa de commencer tout de suite.
(Le Dantec 1951: 203)

Interestingly, both Baudelaire and de Wailly are quite removed from the original register of the English text, which here constitutes a formal account of a pseudo-scientific experiment in hypnosis, with a narrator whose idiolect consists of a dry and slightly academic language. However, some differences can be observed. Firstly, Valdemar's "approaching dissolution," is more closely translated by de Wailly's "fin prochaine," though "disparition," defined in the *Trésor* as "action ou fait de disparaître en cessant d'exister" (*Trésor* 7: 284) would here have been possible and closer to the original field of discourse of "dissolution." Baudelaire's "mort prochaine" is even further removed from that field than "fin prochaine" and makes the field and tone more prosaic and less detached. Secondly, in English the narrator uses the more academic-sounding prepositional phrase "on the subject of," whereas both de Wailly and Baudelaire opt for a simple preposition: "sur" and "de." Third, Baudelaire introduces a supplementary tone of intimacy with the informal "causai" for "spoke," which in *Littre* is defined as "s'entretenir familièrement" (*Littre* 1: 771), and which the *Trésor* explains as "S'entretenir familièrement avec une ou plusieurs personnes de manière spontanée et en prenant son temps" (*Trésor* 5: 321), a definition which shows that with "causai" Baudelaire oversteps the boundaries of the original register and changes a formal conversation into a chat. De Wailly, meanwhile, sticks to the more obvious translation of "spoke" by "parlai." The more impersonal and less dynamic passive of "the experiment proposed" is maintained by de Wailly's "expérience projetée," but not in Baudelaire's "expérience que nous nous étions proposée."

We can again observe, then, that the strategy deployed by Baudelaire's rival is not all that much different from what Baudelaire does himself, though de Wailly certainly lacks Baudelaire's precision. De Wailly seems – at the least – to want to reproduce everything that is in the original, but there is, as yet, no serious attempt to reproduce the original register – neither can this be noted consistently on Baudelaire's part. Not much more can or needs to be said about de Wailly's work, except that from 1853 onwards, around the time when Baudelaire was establishing

his fame as *the* Poe translator, de Wailly's name faded and his further translations passed largely unnoticed (Lemonnier 1928: 79).

6.3.5. William Little Hughes

Quite the contrary happened to Hughes, whom Lemonnier calls “Le plus tenace des rivaux de Baudelaire” for the following reasons: firstly because Hughes attempted – in vain – to continue publishing his own translations even after the *Histoires extraordinaires* had come out. Unfortunately for him:

C'est que le succès des *Histoires Extraordinaires* de Baudelaire ne laisse champ à aucun autre traducteur. Hughes ne trouve plus à placer ses versions. (Lemonnier 1928: 82)

Secondly, Hughes survived Baudelaire, and he did manage to publish, after Baudelaire's death, certain stories which Baudelaire had also translated, thus becoming the only re-translator of stories for which a Baudelaire translation is extant. The volume, however, does not seem to have survived the turn of the century:

Et enfin, trente ans après ce moment où il rêvait de publier une édition complète de Poe, il se risquera à reprendre en volume un certain nombre de contes dont quelques uns avaient été déjà traduits par Baudelaire et il donnera des *Œuvres Choiesies d'Edgar Poe*. (Lemonnier 1928: 83)⁴⁹

Hughes, who was of Irish origin, was an experienced translator and a respected member of literary circles. He was a protégé of Alexandre Dumas, to whom he had been recommended by an acquaintance of his in the following terms:

Je vous présente un littérateur anglo-français ... qui sait lire dans les livres de Poe, ce qui est rare, et qui sait les reproduire dans notre langue, ce qui est presque impossible, car un Anglais seul, et un Anglais qui connaît le dialecte américain, peut atteindre ce but. (quoted in Lemonnier 1928: 81)

⁴⁹ Richard also mentions the “*Œuvres choisies*. 1885. Paris: Hennuyer” (Richard 1989: 1586).

Incidentally, this comment, dated May 1854, when the reading public was becoming more and more familiar with one particular Poe translator (namely Baudelaire), shows that not everyone was happy to see Baudelaire gaining the monopoly on Poe, and that the strongest objection may have lain in the fact that people knew that Baudelaire lacked the necessary linguistic competence to translate correctly an American author. Lemonnier also indicates that one of Baudelaire's important literary acquaintances, Sainte-Beuve, knew William Hughes and appreciated his talents as a translator: "Sainte-Beuve aussi appréciait beaucoup les connaissances de Hughes en anglais, et l'appelait souvent à son secours pour lire et traduire des passages qui l'embarrassaient" (Lemonnier 1928: 81).⁵⁰ Hughes was thus a well-known translator from English, and what is also interesting about his case is that he has left us with a number of comments on his own translation strategies, noted in his preface to his *Œuvres Choisies*:

J'ai suivi, dans ma traduction, le conseil que donne Poe lui-même: "La phraséologie d'un pays quelconque, dit-il, paraîtra toujours drôle aux oreilles de ceux qui parlent une autre langue; or, c'est là un effet que le traducteur doit éviter, s'il ne veut pas donner une fausse idée de l'original." "J'ai donc essayé," continue Hughes, "tout en conservant au style de Poe son caractère propre, de rendre sa pensée *sans lui prêter un faux cachet d'étrangeté*." (quoted in Lemonnier 1928: 85 – my italics)⁵¹

Again, the italicised part of the above paragraph could be taken as criticism of the Baudelaire translations, which, from the beginning, were accused of being too full of "paillettes néologiques" (Lemonnier 1928: 156), and thus giving a false aspect of foreignness – an accusation which will be kept in mind when examining the Baudelaire translations.

Lemonnier's judgment on Hughes' work is harsh, and uniquely based on the translations which Hughes produced in the first period of his work as translator of Poe. Lemonnier speaks of treason, mutilations and incomprehension on Hughes'

⁵⁰ Lemonnier takes this information from "Lettres de Sainte-Beuve à W.L. Hughes, 27 et 30 décembre 1862, 13 février 1865, 19 mars 1866, 19 février 1869. (Nouvelle Correspondance de C.A. Sainte-Beuve" (Lemonnier 1928: 81).

⁵¹ It is not clear where Hughes found this comment of Poe's.

part (Lemonnier 1928: 89, 90, 91) and concludes his evaluation with the following lines:

L'insuffisance de Hughes est patente; et si ses traductions passèrent inaperçues, on ne peut pas dire qu'elles furent injustement traitées.
(Lemonnier 1928: 97)

Hughes, who also enjoyed writing his own prose, indeed tended to add “embellishments” to the text, which would now certainly be considered very disturbing, and in general Hughes’ translations, at least judging from the extracts which Lemonnier puts at our disposal, look rather unsatisfactory. In some places the problem is a matter of vocabulary, and in others it is syntax and punctuation. The example which Lemonnier gives of Hughes’ translation of “The Tell-Tale Heart” is telling indeed, since the narrator’s originally hasty and neurotic speech, full of pauses and abrupt stops, is transformed in Hughes’ translation into a much more flowing syntax:

– but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what *could* I do? I foamed – I raved – I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder – louder – *louder!* And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God! – no, no! They heard! – they suspected! – they *knew!* – they were making a mockery of my horror! – this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! – and now – again! – hark! louder! louder! louder! *louder!* –
(Mabbott 1978: 797)

... mais le bruit me poursuivait. Je m'emparai d'une chaise que je râclai contre le parquet. Peine inutile, le son de ses palpitations m'arrivait plus fort, toujours plus fort. Et ces hommes continuaient à causer tranquillement et à sourire. Etait-il possible qu'ils n'entendissent pas ce que moi j'entendais si bien? Non! ils écoutaient, ils soupçonnaient, ils savaient tout! Ils prenaient plaisir à prolonger mon inquiétude. Mieux valait la mort qu'une pareille agonie. Qui n'eût senti bouillonner son sang devant une semblable moquerie? Je ne pus souffrir ces sourires hypocrites qui singeaient la bienveillance. Je jurai, je hurlai, j'écumai. Je serais mort si je n'avais donné un libre cours à ma colère.
(Hughes in Lemonnier 1928: 91-92)

... mais le bruit croissait régulièrement. Ô Dieu! que pouvais-je faire? J'écumais, – je battais la campagne, – je jurais! j'agitais la chaise sur laquelle j'étais assis, et je la faisais crier sur le parquet; mais le bruit dominait toujours, et croissait indéfiniment. Il devenait plus fort, – plus fort! – toujours plus fort! Et toujours les hommes causaient, plaisantaient et souriaient. Était-il possible qu'ils n'entendissent pas? Dieu tout-puissant! – Non, non! Ils entendaient! – ils soupçonnaient! – ils savaient, – ils se faisaient un amusement de mon effroi! – je le crus, et je le crois encore. Mais n'importe quoi était plus tolérable que cette dérision! Je ne pouvais pas supporter plus longtemps ces hypocrites sourires! Je sentis qu'il fallait crier ou mourir! – et maintenant encore, l'entendez-vous? – écoutez! plus haut! – plus haut! – toujours plus haut! – toujours plus haut!
(Le Dantec 1951: 326)

It does not need much detailed examination to see that Hughes deployed very liberal translation techniques. There are numerous interventions in his translation that are uncalled for by anything in the source text: some of them are pure omissions (e.g. “It grew louder – louder – *louder!*” or “Almighty God!” is not reproduced), some are pure additions (e.g. “ce que moi j’entendais si bien” and “le son de ses palpitations” do not feature in the original) and there is even a displacement (“Je jurai, je hurlai, j’écumai ” is the translation of “I foamed – I raved – I swore!” which features higher up in the paragraph). Moreover, the fear in “the noise steadily increased” is increased by “le bruit me poursuivit,” and that of “my horror” is decreased in “mon inquiétude.” In Hughes’ version, the whole paragraph, which constitutes the ending of the story, is completely undermined by these omissions, additions and other deviations. Most importantly, the originally halting, faltering and freakish account of a paranoid hysteric, realised by a punctuation and sentence structure that supports the high but irregular speed of his speech becomes, in Hughes’s translation, a much less dramatic and exciting ending.

Baudelaire’s text, on the other hand, sticks closely to the original, retains most of its punctuation and thus maintains the rhythm of the neurotic maniac in the midst of an attack of paranoia. Moreover, Baudelaire has omitted nothing, and unlike Hughes, he has correctly understood the importance of the phrases “this I thought, and this I think,” which feature at the very end of the story. This sentence is

significant because it links up the time of the narrative, so far set in past time, with the time of narration, which, with “I think,” becomes the narrator’s present time – a connection which indicates that the narrator, even while narrating the events, is (still) insane. The sentence plays a key role both in this paragraph and in the whole story, and Hughes omission of it shows that he did not see or understand its importance. This could also explain why he did not bother to reproduce the high-strung punctuation which he found in the original. In this, he was not only a less modern, but a much less gifted and trustworthy translator than Baudelaire, and Lemonnier’s harsh judgement seems, for once, quite justified.

6.4. Conclusions

Though the conclusions drawn from the extracts that were just shown sometimes differ from Lemonnier’s observations, one could agree, so far, with Lemonnier’s statement that:

De tous les traducteurs de Poe, Madame Meunier était le plus exact.
Baudelaire était plus exact qu’elle, parce qu’il n’omet jamais rien.
(Lemonnier 1928: 177-178)

This statement needs elucidation. Firstly, Lemonnier here means “of all of Poe’s translators – besides Baudelaire,” and on this point it seems, indeed, that of the four cases just discussed, Meunier is the most literal translator. However, it should be added that Baudelaire made more mistakes than Meunier, at least in the extract that features above.

The point of this chapter, however, was not to determine who was the more “exact” translator of Poe, but to assess the kind of translation that had been done of Poe’s work in Baudelaire’s time. In general, after the first few (unavowed) imitations and adaptations, the tendency is certainly towards more literalism, though most of the translators, including Baudelaire, still seem to have trouble in persistently applying this new translation norm. Still, by the time Baudelaire was frequently publishing his translations in magazines (1854-1855) and even more so

by the time of the publication of his first collection (1856), the norm of literalism and (relatively) close translation had become quite firmly established, and it would have been strange had Baudelaire translated in any other way.

However, it is unlikely that Baudelaire ever wished to translate otherwise than closely and literally – his project of literalism, after all, was stated at the very beginning of his career as Poe translator, in 1848 – which shows that at least instinctively, he was in tune with his translational horizon. As indicated in the first part of this chapter, the fact that he opted to stick to literalism can therefore not really be seen as an innovation, since he was thus simply complying with the norms, implicit and transitional as they still may have been, of prose translation that reigned his period. The Baudelaire translations can thus not be said to have set a precedent in translation practice, and as the previous chapter also shows, the public interest in the translations had more to do with the personal relationship which Baudelaire established between himself and Poe, and with the way in which Baudelaire put himself forward as Poe's guardian, which was also fashionable translation practice. The investigation as to what the effect on the translations of such a position, stance, project and horizon may have been, can now begin.

Chapter Seven: A Para-Textual Critique of “La chute de la Maison Usher”

7.1. Introduction

The pre-analytical inquiries carried out in Chapters Four, Five and Six, make up the first part of the application of Berman’s proposals for Translation Criticism, and constitute the framework in which a number of facts that inform one about Baudelaire’s position, project, stance and horizon as a translator were established. The present chapter, as its title indicates, will consist of a continuation of this application of Berman’s guidelines on Baudelaire’s translation of “The Fall of the House of Usher.”

This chapter will be carried out in two stages. Firstly, as indicated in Chapter Three, an independent reading of the translation and of the original texts, prior to any detailed and comparative analysis, will be simulated. This “pre-reading” should confer the impressions yielded by the readings of the translation and the original as independent texts, and the differences between these two. This is an “interim” stage, in the sense that the impressions given there should be considered as hypotheses which serve to raise a number of questions which can then be “asked” of the translation. The pre-reading will thus direct the comparative analysis of the translation and the original, and will also allow presenting that analysis in a manner that will underscore the respective readings to which the French and English text can give rise.

The point of the analysis is then to assess in detail where and how the thematic content and stylistic effects of the target text differ from those of the original. Though mistranslations and unhappy choices will be discussed at times, the idea is not so much to assess or evaluate the translation in terms of “good” or “bad” but to compare it to the original and decide where the fundamental differences may lie. In the conclusions of this chapter, the connection can then be made between the questions which Berman asks the critic to keep in mind during the pre-reading

stage, and the assessments derived from the comparison between translation and original. Lastly, the information regarding Baudelaire's position, project, stance and horizon, gathered in the preceding chapters, can then be brought to bear on these assessments.

7.2. Text and Para-Text of “La chute de la Maison Usher” and “The Fall of the House of Usher”

Baudelaire's “La chute de la Maison Usher” was first published in *Le pays* in three episodes, on 7, 9 and 13 February 1855 (Richard 1989: 1348). The version consulted here is the one which appeared in the second volume of translations, the *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires* (1857) (Le Dantec 1951: 337-357). As Lemonnier has shown, between the first publication of this translation and its final appearance in the collection, the text underwent, as did all of Baudelaire's translations, a number of corrections and changes, which, however, do not affect the issues taken up in this chapter (see Lemonnier 1928: 137-153).

Richard correctly states that Baudelaire used Griswold's edition of Poe's work as source text (Richard 1989: 1348). This version, published in Griswold's *Prose Writers of America* in 1847 (Mabbott 1978: 396), is not the one which features in Mabbott, and which is consulted here as a source text. However, the editorial differences between the original versions are also minor, and upon verification none of them prove to be of any impact on the issues tackled in this chapter.

An important piece of para-textual information is the general title under which Poe's text, when first appearing in book form, came out. The collection was called *Tales of the Grotesque and the Arabesque* and this title, indicating the genre under which we can categorise “The Fall of the House of Usher” (i.e. the “arabesque”), thus has an initial bearing on our reading of it.⁵² Baudelaire, however, did not

⁵² Anticipating the discussion of the terms “arabesque” and “grotesque,” which will be treated in more detail at a later stage, and in order to justify the attribution of the term “arabesque” to “The Fall of the House of Usher,” a general definition, found in Forclaz, is given here: “D’une manière

retain this title or any of its elements, and this first para-textual signpost, which indicates to the reader under which genre the story can be categorised, does therefore not exist for the French version. Baudelaire's collection title simply refers back to the first volume of translations (*Histoires extraordinaires*), thus presenting itself as a continuation of that first collection. The point is of importance because the term "arabesque" is significant for one's understanding and for the comparison of the two versions.

As far as autographic para-text is concerned, there appear to be no footnotes from the hand of Baudelaire to accompany his translation. It should also be noted that Baudelaire did not discuss the story anywhere, but some of his comments on Poe's person and favourite themes, which feature in the essay "Edgar Poe, sa vie et ses ouvrages" (Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1001-1029) are relevant for this chapter. Moreover, certain literary opinions of Poe's which Baudelaire repeated (plagiarised) in his "Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe," (Le Dantec 1951 [1857]: 1049-1062), will also be relevant for the reading and analysis in this chapter.

Besides this small amount of Baudelairean para-text, there is a large amount of public epi-text concerning the "Fall of the House of Usher," based on both the French and the English version, though the latter constitutes, rather logically, the large majority of the essays. The much smaller amount of para-text on the French version (e.g. Bonaparte 1933, Pinto 1983), is unfortunately either obsolete or not very relevant. Richard's reading is interesting, but marred by the fact that he consults and comments on a *mix* of the two versions, a method of reading which, needless to say, gives highly problematic results (Richard 1989: 63-65 and 1348-1353 notes). For a better understanding of the original, we can turn to Kinkead-Weekes (1987), Buranelli (1977), Walker and Hill (in Howarth 1971), Wilbur (in Carlson 1966), Bieganski (in May 1991), Forclaz (1974) and Brown (in Rachman & Rosenheim 1995).

générale, le terme [arabesque] s'applique aux contes caractérisés par l'unité et l'harmonie et contenant une valeur suggestive; les contes "grotesques," au contraire, sont caractérisés par l'extravagance et le burlesque et sont dénués d'unité véritable et de signification; ils sont privés de toute valeur suggestive" (Forclaz 1974: 168).

7.3. Pre-Reading the Translation and the Original

With regards to the pre-readings that now follow, the reader is referred to the relevant section in Chapter Three for a reminder of the questions which Berman asks the translation critic to keep in mind during this stage of independent readings, and to which the answers will be given at the end of this chapter.

7.3.1. Pre-Reading “La chute de la Maison Usher”

This is a short story in which an “I-narrator” (Leech and Short 1981: 262) recounts the events that lead up to the final dissolution of both the family and the mansion of the Ushers. The two protagonists in the story are the narrator and Roderick Usher, last descendant of the line, artist and musician, and highly sensitive personality. Other people who appear as silent characters in the story are Madeline Usher, Roderick’s sickly twin sister who dies in the middle of the story, a doctor and a valet. The narrator, a childhood friend of Usher’s, has been summoned to the latter’s gloomy old mansion without knowing the exact grounds for the summons, and during his residence there is gradually taken over by the atmosphere that surrounds that place, and by the strange circumstances of first Madeline’s and eventually Usher’s deaths. In spite of this gradual change in his mental condition, the narrator continues to attempt, throughout the story, to find rational explanations for the strange phenomena he observes, and clings to the possibility of a “realistic” interpretation. In this, he relies on what he thinks are established truths or verified a priori knowledge. He also adamantly refuses to indulge in the more supernatural or esoteric causes to which Usher attributes his condition and the bizarre atmosphere in which the mansion bathes, and rejects these as being signs of Usher’s madness.

The two reactions combine to mark the narrator as a player in, and integral part of, the events that make up the story – the narrator's involvement is such that his oscillations coincide with and are absorbed by the events and the surroundings. The narrator seems so strongly affected by and involved in what he sees around him, both on a physical and mental level, that his own reactions, which sometimes verge on hysteria, help to build up the terror that pervades the story. He loses control over his feelings and impressions, and becomes less and less able to judge his own position or role in the events – an aspect of his behaviour that enhances his absorption and involvement.

The contradictions in the narrator's attitude, his vacillation between reluctantly considering, but always rejecting supernatural (and often allegorical or symbolic) interpretations on the one hand, and his desperate clinging to more "rational" alternatives or pre-established truths on the other, combined with the terror to which he slowly becomes prey, induce the reader to share his perplexity, and also his inability – in spite of his willingness – to judge his own condition and explain the extraordinary events that happen.

A number of Poe's favourite symbols and metaphors are also present here, and some of his scientific and philosophical interests also find their expression. The gothic mansion has all the features that are recurrent in many of Poe's tales: the deep vaults, high ceilings, intricate passageways, moving draperies, and enshrouding mist can be found, for instance, in "Ligeia" and "Morella," and the closed cabinet where Usher dwells is reminiscent of the room in which Dupin does his thinking. The theme which floats through all this is the physical and spiritual amalgamation of a person and his surroundings, i.e. the identification, and the simultaneous growth or decay of a character and the scenes in which he moves. This is achieved, on the one hand, by explicit mention from both the narrator and Usher of the possibility of sentience, that is, the attribution of life to lifeless or inorganic objects, an idea which Usher proposes and which the narrator contemplates but rejects. This animistic-esoteric theme forms the subtext to the story, and is realised more implicitly, on the other hand, by a play on symmetry

and a subversion of that symmetry between the organic and the inorganic elements in the story. Animate and inanimate things are thus seen to “behave” in either an identical or a symmetrically opposed manner. The most straightforward and explicit example of this play on symmetry and the inversion of symmetry are the resemblances, remarked upon first by the narrator and then by Usher himself, between the family traits and the exterior aspects of the mansion, which both show signs of far-advanced decay, and whose gloomy moods seem to fit together.

It should be observed at this point that the idea of the sentience of inorganic things was an hypothesis not altogether rejected by nineteenth-century scientists, and one which fits into Poe’s general cosmology as he described it in *Eureka*. As indicated above, the narrator shows reluctance in admitting these ideas, and when one observes a lack of consistency in his reflections on these issues, this could be explained precisely by his reluctance to accept their symbolic or allegorical meanings.

7.3.2. Pre-Reading “The Fall of the House of Usher”

Poe’s narrator seems generally more inclined than the French narrator to use his imagination to interpret the events that happen around him. Though he also seems affected – albeit less strongly – on a physical and spiritual level by what is happening around him, he is still in a condition to give free reign to his imagination and shows a less negative attitude towards Usher’s forays into the supernatural than his French counterpart. Not only does the English version present a less hysterical account from a slightly less shocked and terrorised narrator than in the French text, but the narrator (and the reader with him) is also less sceptical when it comes to admitting Usher’s esoteric interpretations of what is going on.

The English narrator seems less desperate to cling to known or “reasonable” explanations, and his reactions imply a fascination and respect for Usher’s artistic creations and his esoteric notions. The narrator’s imaginative faculties seem to

somehow protect him against the terror that is slowly rising – possibly because they help him, to a certain degree, to “explain” the causes of his terror, or at least make them more easy to accept. This entails that when the inexplicable finally arises, the reader is almost forced to believe that something has also happened to the *narrator*, that the narrator has finally gone mad, or is having an hallucination. What remains unexplained in the story (e.g. Madeline’s death and reappearance), can thus be accepted either by referring to the circumstances and the surroundings, which are supposedly giving the narrator hallucinations, or by applying as scientific fact – and at the same time highly symbolic conclusion – the idea of sentience proposed by Usher.

In the English version, the presence of an allegorical and symbolic content is thus felt more strongly than in the translation. With the English narrator, who is seen to reject overtly, but toy covertly with the idea of sentience, and who certainly seems more receptive to Usher’s esoteric ideas, the reader can muse upon these notions, and thus also retrace representations of them in the symbolism that crowds the story and constitutes its underlying structure. The reader of the English text is thus more inclined to pay attention to these details, because the narrator seems to value them as having greater importance, and their significance is hereby heightened. In sum, the English version, with a more detached and imaginative narrator, allows the reader two options: either to disbelieve the narrator’s descriptions and consider them as a product of a prolonged hallucination (or another altered mental state), or to contemplate and accept the hypothesis posed by the theory of sentience as a possible explanation for the events in the story.

7.3.3. Comparing First Impressions and Distilling Guiding Questions

It becomes clear that the major difference between the French and English versions lies with the narrator’s impressions and reactions. In terms of narrative structure there is not much difference between the French and English versions, and the lines of the plot are (for the most part) maintained, but the meanings and connotations are different, as the whole narrative is seen through a different

perspective. Though it must be pointed out, as the abundance and variety of public epi-text illustrates, that numerous readings are certainly possible for *one* single version, our first impression of the French narrator undeniably shows him experiencing things differently from his English counterpart.

The questions that will therefore be asked, and which will guide the more detailed analysis of the two texts, should thus centre on the one hand around the narrator and his perceptions, and on the other hand on the play on symmetry and the idea of sentience, which runs throughout the story, and which seems to be foregrounded less strongly in the French version. Two questions are thus formed:

1. What is the narrator's perspective on things, i.e. how does he observe them, how does he reflect on them, how does he recount them and what are his mental resources, i.e. what does the narrator refer to and recur to in order to assess and evaluate what is going on around him? Why does the narrator seem less imaginative and more fragile in the French version?
2. How is the play on symmetry and the inversion of symmetry worked out in the French version? How is the idea of sentience presented in the texts, and what are the main differences here?

With these guiding questions as a starting point, a detailed comparison of both versions can now begin. For reasons of conciseness, a selection had to be made among the numerous examples which shed light on the impressions just described, and it is obviously the most telling examples which have been maintained and reproduced here.

7.4. Comparative Analysis

7.4.1. Perceptions, Thoughts and Feelings of the Narrator

One of the first impressions which strike the reader when comparing the narrators' perceptions and reactions in both versions, is how the French narrator seems more immediately and deeply affected, both on a physical and mental level, by his surroundings and by the events that take place. In the following paragraphs, it will be shown how this impression both entails and is derived from the fact that the French narrator is an altogether more "rational" person, that is to say, a person who, instead of relying on his imagination, tries to find what he deems to be rational explanations. When such attempts prove to be futile, it therefore seems more natural for this kind of narrator to be utterly at a loss and incapable to assess his own position.

The first passage in this section contains a number of elements that illustrate this point, while it also allows me to introduce a fundamentally problematic issue in Baudelaire's translation. The extract is taken from the beginning of the story, at a point where the narrator, having arrived "in view of" the House of Usher, is contemplating its gloomy exterior, which he finds unsettling. He asks himself:

Qu'était donc ce je ne sais quoi qui m'énervait ainsi en contemplant la Maison Usher? C'était un mystère tout à fait insoluble et je ne pouvais lutter contre les pensées ténébreuses qui s'amoncelaient sur moi pendant que j'y réfléchissais.

(Le Dantec 1951: 337, lines 26-31)

What was it – I paused to think – what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered.

(Mabbott 1978: 397-398, lines 21-24)

The first difference to note here is that the French narrator asks himself what "énervait" him so. *Littre's* explanations for "énerver" mainly refer to physical effects, though under point three we find "Ôter le nerf, la force physique ou

morale” (*Littre* 2: 2059). The *Trésor* gives other figurative explanations: “Faire perdre à quelqu’un ses forces physiques ou morales” is the first of these, but the more common explanation is certainly “Exciter, irriter les nerfs de quelqu’un; rendre nerveux” (*Trésor* 7: 1082). Following these definitions, it can be asserted that the French narrator is in a state of nervousness or psychological agitation. The English narrator, on the other hand, is not really agitated or nervous, but unmanned and/or bewildered. *OED* gives, for “unnerve,” “to deprive (the mind etc., or a person) of firmness and courage; to render incapable of acting with ordinary firmness or energy” (*OED* 11: 279), but does not mention the French dimension of agitation or irritation. *Webster’s* does give, as analogous word (but not as synonym), “agitate,” but also has “bewilder” in that category, and it is this meaning which the English context seems to suggest, as will be seen further on. In comparison, the French narrator thus begins the story in a more agitated or nervous state than the English one.

Secondly, while contemplating the exterior aspect of the house, the French narrator is trying to “lutter contre” a number of “pensées ténébreuses.” “Lutter contre,” in its figurative sense, means “Combattre, résister” (*Littre* 3: 3608), and in the *Trésor* it is defined as “Faire des efforts soutenus et énergiques pour vaincre quelque chose,” and the very appropriate example of “lutter contre une impression, une sensation” (*Trésor* 11: 75) is given here. The French narrator is thus trying to get rid of certain “pensées” that bother him – which explains his nervousness and agitation, but which does not coincide with his otherwise contemplative mood. In English, the narrator is trying to “grapple with” things, in the sense given in *OED*, namely, “to try to deal with (a question, etc.); to try to solve (a problem, etc.)” (*OED* 5: 362). Moreover, what the English narrator is trying to come to terms with are not “pensées,” but “fancies.”

The difference between “fancies” and “pensées” is of such importance to the present chapter that it will need a side-step to be fully explained. This excursus will be made now, before continuing the examination of the perceptions and feelings of the narrator.

7.4.1. bis. Side-Step: On Fancy, Imagination, the Arabesque and the Grotesque

Among the para-text in Richard's edition of Poe's œuvre in French, one finds a number of footnotes in which Richard comments on Baudelaire's translation of the term "fancy." In spite of being the provider of a valuable clue, however, Richard never elaborated this point; on several occasions he indicates the problems of Baudelaire's translation of fancy, sometimes by "idée," often by "pensée" and, less frequently, by "imagination," but nowhere does Richard develop the point into its larger-scale translational and textual consequences. Moreover, it is difficult to adhere to Richard's interpretation of Poe's concept of fancy, especially when Richard describes it as "quasi-antonyme de l'*imagination*," or when he defines fancy as a negative faculty, as in the comment he makes on Roderick Usher, whose "*imagination* révélatrice de l'idéalité s'est dégradé en "laborieuse *fancy*" " (Richard 1989: 64), an example which will be re-examined at a later stage, but which, incidentally, illustrates how Richard's comments are invalidated by his mixing of the French and English versions.

As Richard correctly points out, the English word fancy has no direct equivalent in French: "*Fancy* est un idiome anglais. Rêverie, fantaisie, lubie sont peut-être les traductions moins inexactes" (Richard 1989: 1302n). However, Richard assigns a degree of nefariousness to the notion which Poe never attributed to it. For Poe, fancy and imagination formed a pair, but the two should not be described as antonymous in Poe's thought, nor does fancy have a particularly negative quality – at least not in Poe's own philosophy, which, of course, one should not confuse with his characters' feelings and beliefs.

The confusion on Richard's part is surprising because Poe himself gave pretty clear indications on the topic, both in his *Marginalia* and in "The Poetic Principle." Buranelli (Buranelli 1977) and Forclaz (Forclaz 1974) also discuss the issue, and both indicate that Poe's opinions on the subject were aligned with the

ideas of A.W. Schlegel and especially S.T. Coleridge. Buranelli begins his exposition on Poe's treatment of fancy with an explanation of the "three faculties," Taste, Intellect and Moral Sense, and centres on the role of intuition in Poe's description of these faculties. Buranelli explains that for Poe:

Each [of the three faculties] works at times discursively, circling around a problem in a more or less mechanical fashion, applying rules and procedural methods. For intellect, this process is the deductive and inductive reasoning of the handbooks on logic. *For taste, it is the fancy that moves according to the association of ideas.* Intellect breaks down into intuition (analysis) and reasoning. *Taste breaks down into intuition (imagination) and fancy.* (Buranelli 1977: 47 – my italics)

Fancy and the imagination were for Poe the two sides of the faculty called Taste, and Taste was reckoned to be the "sole arbiter" of Beauty (Poe 1984 [1850]: 78). Moreover, a particularity of Poe's ideas was his conviction that the intellect's analytical powers were also enhanced by the imagination. This topic will also come up in Chapter Eight, where Baudelaire's translation of one of Poe's analytical tales of ratiocination will be analysed.

In Forclaz one also finds an examination of the distinction between fancy and imagination, and Forclaz's suggestions are useful because they lead to other issues that are relevant for the present chapter. Forclaz, whose comments were based on the English versions of Poe's stories, refers to Poe's review of Thomas Moore's *Alciphron*, already partly quoted in Chapter Five, in which Poe stated:

The truth is that the just distinction between the fancy and the imagination (and which is still but a distinction *of degree*) is involved in the consideration of the *mystic* ... The term *mystic* is here employed in the sense of August Wilhelm Schlegel, and of most other German critics. It is applied by them to that class of compositions in which there lies beneath the transparent upper current of meaning an under or *suggestive* one ... It has the vast force of an accompaniment in music. This vivifies the air; that spiritualizes the *fanciful* conception, and lifts it into the *ideal*. (Poe 1984 [1840]: 337)

If Poe begins by saying that fancy and imagination are distinct from one another only in degree, he means that they are not different in intensity or force, but in the

degree to which they constitute man's special creative power. In that sense, fancy may give us certain perceptions of hidden meanings, but it is the imagination which "lifts" us towards the Ideal. The imagination, for Poe, is the foremost faculty, and for a writer who "conceived of God as a poet" (Wilbur 1959: 257), the imagination is therefore man's most "divine" faculty. "A distinction of degree" should thus be understood as "the degree to which it likens man's creative powers to those of God." For Poe, the difference is that the imagination creates and appreciates beauty by setting itself to work, whereas fancy – and here Poe follows Coleridge's cue on "association" and on the idea that fancy is a "mode of memory" (Coleridge 1956: 167) is triggered by association with already existing things. This also supports the previous argument that Richard is wrong in defining Poe's fancy as "*toujours négativement connoté par lui [Poe]*" (Richard 1989: 1367n), and the hypothesis may be ventured that Richard's interpretation of the pair of terms was based more on the way in which Poe's characters perceived these notions and experienced their effects, than on Poe's proper understanding of them. In Poe, fancy can in no way be considered as the dark or negative side of the imagination, nor is it a derived or diluted version of it. It is a creative power over which the subject has no volitional or directional control, which works by association and is set in motion by unexplained impulses or external triggers, instead of conscious effort.

More specifically, in "The Fall of the House of Usher" the recurrence and foregrounding of the term fancy signals that the observations and perceptions of the narrator sprout from his imagination, or at least from the associative type of imagination triggered by memory. This is why the English version makes it possible to consider this story as a tale told by someone who finds himself in the "hypnagogic state," i.e. the state of "sleep-waking" which Poe saw as "a class of fancies, of exquisite delicacy" (Poe 1984: 1383), and which Baudelaire had already mistaken for "somnambulisme," in his translation of "Mesmeric Revelation" (see Chapter Four). Such a reading of the English version is suggested by Wilbur, who claims that "we must understand "The Fall of the House of Usher" as a dream of the narrator's in which he leaves behind him the waking, physical world and

journeys inward toward his *moi intérieur*, toward his inner and spiritual Self. That inner and spiritual self is Roderick Usher" (Wilbur 1959: 265). The notion of fancy thus also supports the idea that Roderick Usher, the narrator and even Madeline Usher are all doubles of the same persona, allegorically represented, moreover, in the ballad "The Haunted Palace" which features in the story.

Baudelaire clearly shows that he did not distinguish between fancy and imagination, since at the end of "La chute de la Maison Usher," he twice translates the word "fancy" by "imagination." The first instance occurs when the narrator, in an attempt to calm down Usher's hysteria and his own nerves, reads a story to Usher of which the auditory effects seem to reverberate through the mansion as he reads it. When this occurs for the first time, the narrator says "I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me," which Baudelaire translates by "je conclus bien vite à une illusion de mon imagination" (Mabbott 1978: 414, line 564-565 and Le Dantec 1951: 353, lines 700-701). When the narrator hears the echo or sound again, he describes it as "the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer" (Mabbott 1978: 414, lines 593-594), which Baudelaire translates as "l'exacte contre-partie du cri surnaturel du dragon décrit par le romancier, et tel que mon imagination se l'était déjà figuré" (Le Dantec 1951: 354, lines 733-735).

The confusion between fancy and imagination has important consequences throughout Baudelaire's translations of Poe's tales, as Richard's notes to the translations of stories like "Ligeia," "The Double Murders in the Rue Morgue," or "The Black Cat" further indicate (Richard 1989:1338-1340, 1366-1369 and 1398-1400 notes). The consequences for the present story also reach beyond the terms fancy and imagination. There is, for instance, Poe's preceding statement that the imagination "is involved in the consideration of the *mystic*," and that he associated this mystic quality with works which have "beneath the transparent upper current of meaning an under or *suggestive* one" (cf. *supra*). It is the mystic quality of events, atmospheres or works of art which calls forth the imagination,

in the sense that one relies on one's imagination to experience and understand that undercurrent of meaning, and the term has its obvious importance when it features in a fictional and highly "suggestive" narrative. Poe thus clearly understood "mystic" in a larger than strictly religious sense, and it also meant more to him than simply "mysterious." When in his translation of "The Fall of the House of Usher," Baudelaire twice opts for "mystérieux," those translations are therefore restrictive. This issue is especially significant for the passage where "mystic" occurs with reference to the allegorical ballad which Usher produces for the narrator, "The Haunted Palace," of which the "under- or mystic current of its meaning" (Mabbott 1978: 406, line 311) is translated by Baudelaire as "le sens intérieur et mystérieux de l'œuvre" (Le Dantec 1951: 346, lines 395-396). Moreover, Baudelaire's choice of "mystérieux" is also an easy way of increasing the suggestion of a hidden menace, which, as will become clear, Baudelaire was prone to do in his translations.

Forclaz, who translates "fancy" rather widely by "fantaisie," discusses Poe's usage of these terms along lines that are of further significance for this chapter:

La distinction entre l'imagination et la fantaisie éclaire l'œuvre créatrice de Poe et l'opposition établie par le conteur entre "arabesques" et "grotesques." On a généralement considéré les deux termes comme à peu près synonymes, la seule différence entre les deux catégories de conte étant une différence de degré; mais s'ils sont synonymes chez Scott, il n'en va pas de même chez Poe: la distinction entre les deux genres est précisément la même que celle entre l'imagination et la fantaisie. (Forclaz 1974: 167)

As Forclaz further explains, the distinction which Poe made between the terms "arabesque" and "grotesque" was very similar to the one A.W. Schlegel had observed between them, though Poe's and Schlegel's interpretations in turn differed from the way the French Romantics generally understood these terms:

Il faut aussi replacer ces termes dans la contexte romantique: le grotesque est l'opposé du sublime selon Victor Hugo, qui l'associe au difforme, à l'horrible, au comique, au bouffon et, d'une façon générale, aux créations entièrement imaginaires. Le terme prend un sens un peu différent chez

Friedrich Schlegel: il désigne le contraste entre le fond et la forme et caractérise le sentiment de l'insondabilité du monde et de l'aliénation de l'homme; le grotesque est ainsi le monde du chaos et de l'absurde. Quant au terme d' "arabesque," qu'on a généralement interprété comme impliquant une exclusion de la figure humaine, il est chez Schlegel synonyme de "fantastique," dans le sens premier du mot – qui est le produit de l'imagination; l'arabesque est selon lui "la forme la plus ancienne et originelle de l'imagination humaine."
(Forclaz 1974: 167-168)

The above comments also confirm that the terms and the "philosophy" of the imagination which they represented, were familiar themes in Baudelaire's literary horizon. It is therefore surprising that Baudelaire did not reproduce these terms in a way that showed that he had understood their importance for Poe – a remark has already been made upon Baudelaire's title *Histoires grotesques et sérieuses* for his last collection, a bemusing title for a book that included translations of literary essays (e.g. "The Philosophy of Composition"), of a detective story ("The Mystery of Mary Roget") and of literary sketches (e.g. "Philosophy of Furniture" and "The Landscape Garden"). Moreover, in other translations of the terms Baudelaire also proved his varying interpretations of them – in his French rendering of "Ligeia," he translates, for instance, "the wildest and most grotesque specimens" by "d'ornements des plus bizarres et des plus fantastiques," thus translating "grotesque" by what Schlegel (and Poe) usually called "arabesque." When it occurred, Baudelaire usually translated "arabesque" by the same word in French, which does not show whether he actually understood the meaning of the term.

This side-step will be concluded with a fourth element of Baudelaire's translation that is related to his misunderstanding of "fancy." On numerous occasions in "The Fall of the House of Usher," the narrator uses the adjective and adverb "wild(ly)," mainly in the sense of "bewildering" or "fantastic," and Baudelaire again shows that he is at a loss to correctly translate this word. Here are some of the examples found in the texts – they are numbered in order to facilitate their examination:

1. – *une lettre de lui, – dont la tournure follement pressante ...*
– a letter from him – which, in its wildly importunate nature ...
2. ... *il semblait qu'il y eût une contradiction étrange entre ...*
... there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between ...
3. ... *j'écoutais, comme dans un rêve, ses étranges improvisations ...*
... I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations ...
4. ... *une certaine paraphrase singulière, – une perversion de l'air, déjà fort étrange de la dernière valse de von Weber.*
... a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber.
5. *Je songeais malgré moi à l'étrange rituel contenu dans ce livre ...*
I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work ...
6. ... *l'étrange influence de ses superstitions fantastiques et contagieuses.*
... the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive suggestions.
7. ... *un sentiment de violent étonnement ...*
... a feeling of wild amazement ...

From these occurrences, one can deduce that “wild(ly)” was used by Poe in a variety of its senses. Cases 1 and 3 seem to convey the sense which features in *OED* under entry 13, namely “Going beyond prudent or reasonable limits; rashly or inconsiderably venturesome; going to extremes of extravagance or absurdity; fantastically unreasonable,” whereas in case 6 “wild” should be understood more in the meaning of “Artless, free, unconventional, fanciful, or romantic in style” (*OED* 12: 122). Cases 1, 6 and 7 also correspond to the meaning which *OED* attributes to “feelings, or their expression,” and which signifies “highly excited or agitated; passionately vehement or impetuous” (*ibid*), whereas the meaning “Not submitting to moral control; taking one’s own way in defiance of moral obligation or authority; unruly, insubordinate; wayward, self-willed” (*ibid*) is fitting for case 5. Out of the seven cases, Baudelaire translated once by “violent,” namely in the case of a feeling or emotion. He also uses “follement,” the adverb derived from “fou,” which, in its extended sense of “Excessif, et qui a, pour ainsi dire, quelque

chose de fou” (*Litttré* 2: 2587) adds the notion of madness, which is not necessarily contained in “wild.” In all the other cases, however, Baudelaire translates indiscriminately by “étrange,” a translation upon which, in case 4, Richard remarks “Étrange ne rend pas pleinement le sens de *wild*. Les improvisations de Usher sont effreignées, c’est à dire, des créations esthétiques qui échappent aux censures du goût et de la raison” (Richard 1989 : 1350 note 24).

Throughout the translation of “The Fall of the House of Usher” Baudelaire can be seen to struggle with the term wild, and the fact that he translated it most frequently by “étrange,” works to give the narrator a more rationalising attitude. The English narrator, by his use of “wild” for ideas, feelings or objects, implies his excitement and fascination with the things modified by that adjective. In other words, Baudelaire’s translation of the recurrent adjective “wild” as “étrange” entails that the French narrator is also more focused on established ways of seeing things, and less open to interpretations that are out of his ordinary range of experience, since “étrange” has nothing of the extravagance or audaciousness implied by “wild.” This subtlety thus again works to make the French narrator a less imaginative and fanciful person.

In the course of this excursus, the considerable difficulties caused by Baudelaire’s ignorance of the importance of the distinction between “fancy” and “imagination” have been pointed out. It is a recurrent problem in his translations in general, but in the case of “La chute de la Maison Usher” its effects are sufficiently far-reaching to change the nature of the narrative.

7.4.2. Perceptions, Thoughts and Feelings of the Narrator (cont.)

This section now returns to the paragraph with which this analysis was begun, and which features, in the French version, an agitated narrator who is in the process of “lutter contre” his “pensées.” Baudelaire then adds another relevant change to the narrator’s perceptions: the time adverbial phrase “pendant que j’y réfléchissais.”

In English, however, the “unnerved” narrator who was trying to “grapple with” the “shadowy fancies” which his imagination is throwing up, then continues to “ponder.” Again, then, there is a French narrator whose mental activities are slightly more rational than those of the English narrator since “réfléchir” is a less dream-like activity than “ponder,” which here means “to think over, meditate upon” (*OED* 7:1106). This paragraph thus features a French narrator who is not using his imagination at all, but who is nervously rejecting his own state of mind, whereas the English narrator is in a dream-like state trying to understand the things his imagination comes up with, and meditates upon these “fancies.”

After realising that something in the exterior aspect of the mansion of the Ushers is making him nervous, the French narrator continues to “penser,” whereas in English he “reflects” – a difference that is subtle but follows the line of the preceding argumentation. Still, the end of the paragraph is again significant for the way in which the narrator’s perceptions are presented:

Il était possible, pensais-je, qu’une simple différence dans l’arrangement des matériaux de la décoration, des détails du tableau, suffît pour modifier, pour annihiler peut-être cette puissance d’impression douloureuse; agissant d’après cette idée ... je regardai – mais avec un frisson plus pénétrant encore que la première fois ...
(Le Dantec 1951: 338, lines 36-44)

It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impression; and acting upon this idea, I ... gazed down – but with a shudder even more thrilling than before –
(Mabbott 1978: 398, lines 28-34)

Where Poe wrote “gaze,” which means “to look fixedly, intently or deliberately at something” (*OED* 5: 88), Baudelaire translates with a more straightforward and less dreamy “regardai,” and when the English narrator experiences a “thrilling” shudder, the French narrator is taken by a shudder or shiver that is “pénétrant.” Considering that the narrator is not yet supposed to be frightened of anything, but is simply musing on his first impressions of the mansion and its surroundings, “thrilling” can here again be read as something unsettling, but stimulating at the

same time, whereas the French “pénétrant” does not have that more pleasant dimension, and simply exaggerates the force or the intensity of the shudder – *Littre* defines “pénétrer” in its figurative sense as “Percer le coeur de quelque émotion” (*Littre* 3: 4595), and the *Trésor* determines it as “Qui agit fortement sur l’âme; qui touche, qui affecte profondément” (*Trésor* 12 : 1320). Neither of these sources attribute to “pénétrant” a sense which resembles *OED*’s definition of “thrilling,” i.e. “Producing a sudden wave of excitement or emotions, piercing the feelings” (*OED* 7: 362). With “pénétrant” the French narrator is therefore less stimulated and excited by the possibilities of what he is observing.

Another significant occurrence of this difference in perception and state of mind, which also features the problematic “fancy,” appears in the sequence where the narrator, who is still standing in front of the mansion, is trying to deal with “the consciousness of the rapid increase” of his superstitions, precisely by letting his imagination wander:

Et ce fut peut-être l'unique raison qui fit que, quand mes yeux, laissant l'image dans l'étang, se relevèrent vers la maison elle-même, une idée me poussa dans l'esprit, – une idée si ridicule que, si j'en fais mention, c'est seulement pour montrer la force vive des sensations qui m'oppressaient. Mon imagination avait si bien travaillé que je croyais réellement qu'autour de l'habitation et du domaine planait une atmosphère qui lui était particulière, ainsi qu'aux environs les plus proches ...
(Le Dantec 1951: 339, lines 107-115)

And it might have been for this reason only that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy – a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as to really believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity ...
(Mabbott 1978: 399, lines 82-89)

The consequences of Baudelaire’s translation of “fancy” by “idée” in this passage are considerable. Baudelaire’s narrator attributes the sprouting of this “idée” to the fact that his imagination – which seems to be independent of his will – has taken flight on its own. It is his “imagination” which “avait si bien travaillé” so as to

make the French narrator believe that there is an atmosphere peculiar to the house and its surroundings, in other words, the narrator arrives at his conclusion by an involuntary act of his imagination, which is seen as a force in its own of which the narrator becomes a victim. Contrarily, in the English version, it is the narrator who has worked on his imagination, i.e. the narrator is the one who sets his imagination in motion, and out of this motion sprout the “ridiculous” fancies – fancies over which he has little or no control, since they find their source in associative memory. The important difference is that the French narrator does *not* control the forces of his imagination, whereas the English narrator is in full control of them – he can even “work upon” them – though admittedly, he does not control the fancies that sprout from his imagination.

After this passage, the narrator, who is still gazing at the reflection of the House of Usher in the black tarn that lies in front of it, goes into a detailed description of the mansion – parts of which will reappear later, because both the play on symmetry and the idea of sentience are introduced into the story at this point. The narrator rides his horse up to the mansion and is welcomed by a valet who leads him to the part of the house where Usher dwells. As is often the case in Poe, this means passing through many intricate corridors and passages, where the narrator encounters objects which, as he has the same aristocratic background as Usher, seem familiar to him from his own youth, but at the same time have a bewildering effect:

– et, quoique je les reconnusse sans hésitation pour des choses qui m'étaient familières, j'admirais quelles pensées insolites ces images ordinaires évoquaient en moi.

(Le Dantec 1951: 340, lines 157-160)

– while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this – I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. (Mabbott 1978: 400-401, lines 122-124)

Firstly, Baudelaire, adhering closely to his motto of literalism, uses “familier,” a strange choice since this adjective is more often used as “Qui vit avec quelqu'un sans façon et comme en famille” (*Littre* 2: 2398), than with the meaning of

“Ordinaire, habituel” (ibid). Moreover, the antonymous relation that exists between the English “familiar” and “unfamiliar” is also lost, as “insolite,” according to the definitions given by *Litttré* and the *Trésor*, means “Qui n’est point d’usage, qui est contraire à l’usage” (*Litttré* 2: 3245) and “Qui provoque l’étonnement, la surprise par son caractère inhabituel, contraire à l’usage, aux règles ... Syn. Bizarre, étrange, extraordinaire” (*Trésor* 10: 308). “Insolite” does not really stand as a direct antonym of “familier,” and, anticipating on the section on symmetry in this chapter it can be pointed out to the reader that Baudelaire’s choice of syntax and vocabulary here loses the symmetry which Poe had purposely put there.

More importantly, however, this confirms what the pre-reading had also suggested, namely that the French narrator is too certain of his impressions, of his foreknowledge of things, and of the truth of his own feelings. He says “je les reconnusse sans hésitation,” i.e. he has foreknowledge of these things, whereas Poe’s narrator, also without hesitation, acknowledges the familiarity of these objects, which does not imply that he has seen them before. This added assurance on the part of the French narrator could also be noted at an earlier stage, when Baudelaire translated “I was aware” by “Je savais” (Le Dantec 1951: 338, line 71 and Mabbott 1978: 398, line 54), again showing a French narrator who is, in comparison with his English counterpart, quicker to revert to pre-established knowledge and certainties. This trait, of which other examples will occur, works to make the French narrator a less trustworthy (though more cocksure) person – in a way, the naïve belief that he can explain things rationally supports him in continuing to fully rely on his senses – and this makes it acceptable for him to be more easily and directly affected by events once they sweep away his “certainties.”

There are several other instances which suggest this tendency for the French narrator to be over-confident of his knowledge and foreknowledge of things. The following lines suggest that there is a difference in the way the narrators have prepared themselves for the visit to their friend:

Je m'attendais bien à quelque chose dans ce genre, et j'y avais été préparé non seulement par sa lettre, mais aussi par le souvenir de certains traits de son enfance

(Le Dantec 1951: 342, lines 226-228)

For something of this nature I had been prepared, no less by his letter, than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits

(Mabbott 1978: 402, lines 173-175)

Baudelaire's addition of "Je m'attendais bien à" entails that the French narrator has not only been prepared for Usher's present state, but has anticipated it, and is therefore less surprised when he discovers it. Another instance of this exaggerated certainty on the French narrator's part occurs in the following sentence:

Peut-être m'impressionna-t-elle plus fortement, quand il me la montra, parce que, dans le sens intérieur et mystérieux de l'œuvre, je découvris pour la première fois qu'Usher avait pleine conscience de son état, – qu'il sentait que sa sublime raison chancelait sur son trône.

(Le Dantec 1951: 346, lines 394-398)

I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it, as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne.

(Mabbott 1978: 406, lines 309-314)

Besides the translations of "fancied" and "mystic," another major difference can be noted here: the French narrator does not indicate that he doubts the truth of his observation at all, but simply talks about "découvrir" something, whereas the English narrator doubly hedges this observation, and states "I fancied that I perceived," which, again, makes him a lot less confident in his assertions than the French narrator, who still thinks he has all his mental resources.

Another difference noted during the preliminary readings was that Baudelaire's narrator shows more emotional and personal involvement in the fate of his friend, and seems to relate to Usher with greater intimacy – this also gives him a more pedantic aspect, especially when it comes to judging Usher's esoteric interests, a consequence which will be tackled at a later stage of the analysis. The more

intimate position which the French narrator assumes can be illustrated, for instance, in his allusion to Usher's letter, of which he accuses "sa tournure follement pressante" (for "its wildly importunate nature"), which suggests that he sees himself in a position to diagnose Usher's condition – he is, after all, the voice of reason. This role also helps to increase the degree of his own involvement in Usher's state, and for a while the syntax of the French version seems to suggest that it is the narrator's evaluation of Usher's condition which will be the main focus:

Je fus tout d'abord frappé d'une certaine incohérence, – d'une inconsistance dans les manières de mon ami
(Le Dantec 1951: 342, lines 221-222)

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence – an inconsistency
(Mabbott 1978: 402, lines 170-171)

and:

Je vis qu'il était l'esclave subjugué d'une espèce de terreur tout à fait anormale
(Le Dantec 1951: 343, lines 258-259)

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave
(Mabbott 1978: 403, lines 200-201)

In French, the syntactic fronting of the narrator's own reactions shows a different focus on his part. Moreover, in the French version, the narrator seems to condemn or at least disapprove of Usher's attitude, a change which results from Baudelaire's choice of "inconsistance," a noun which carries more than the "want of consistency or congruity; lack of accordance or harmony" (*OED* 5: 173) contained in "inconsistency," and which means in the first place "Qui manque de consistance morale" (*Littre* 2: 3165), "or "Manque de consistance morale, de fermeté dans la pensée ou dans les actes" (*Trésor* 10: 42). This entails that the French narrator is passing a moral judgment on Usher – an attitude of which more examples feature at the end of this section. The French narrator's focus is thus not

so much on what is happening to Usher, but on the moral judgments which this leads him to pass on his friend.

The intimacy between the protagonists is also increased in the French version because Usher is there seen to make certain confessions regarding his condition and that of his twin sister, which he does not make in the English version:

J'appris ainsi, par intervalles, et par des confidences hachées, des demi-mots et des sous-entendus, une autre particularité de sa situation morale.
(Le Dantec 1951: 343, lines 271-273)

I learned, moreover, at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another feature of his mental condition.
(Mabbott 1978: 403, lines 211-212)

The French narrator has not only heard “confidences hachées,” he has also heard “demi-mots” and “sous-entendus,” whereas the English narrator has simply received “broken hints,” which, being also “equivocal” (i.e. “Having different significations equally appropriate or plausible; capable of double interpretation; ambiguous” (*OED* 3: 263)), may or may not have been of an intimate nature. Baudelaire thus strengthens, by his addition of “sous-entendus,” and also by his use of “morale” for “mental,” the possibility of incest which certain French authors (e.g. Kaplan 1993) see hovering over the relationship between Usher and his twin sister, and which will be discussed at a later stage.

With this more intimate relationship and his moralising attitude, it seems natural for the French narrator to be more preoccupied with the condition of his friend, and to take on a more caring attitude. Indeed, the French narrator resembles the “médecin, le psychologue” with which Richard also draws the parallel (Richard 1989: 63). The following example, which occurs when Usher’s twin sister’s death is announced, illustrates this greater emotional and physical involvement in the diagnosis and cure of Usher’s pitiable condition:

... et durant cette période je m'épuisai en efforts pour alléger la mélancolie de mon ami.
(Le Dantec 1951: 344, lines 322-324)

... and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavours to alleviate the melancholy of my friend.
(Mabbott 1978: 404, lines 254-256)

The French narrator is seen to be much more than “busied in earnest endeavours,” he is actually “épuisé” in the effort of trying to find a cure for his friend’s melancholy. Moreover, with “endeavour” Poe’s narrator is attempting to get Usher out of his depression, whereas with “efforts” in French, the narrator is again more confident about the success of his actions. This devotion of the French narrator can possibly be explained by the different way in which Roderick Usher had previously presented his condition. In the original text, when first talking about his terror to the narrator, Usher says that he will “perish **in** this deplorable folly” (Mabbott 1978: 403, lines 201-202), which leaves in the middle whether the folly is entirely his, or whether it is contained in his surroundings. The French version leaves no doubt on the subject, since Usher says: “– *il faut que je meure de cette déplorable folie*” (Le Dantec 1951: 343, line 260), thus making Usher’s condition very clear, and therefore also the natural focus of the narrator’s preoccupations.

Though both narrators become gradually more affected by the atmosphere of dread that seems to fill their surroundings, the French narrator is still the more emotionally confused of the two, so much so that in the French version, he becomes unable to judge his own condition – and this happens quite a bit sooner than in the English version. When Madeline passes in front of his eyes (as a hallucination or not, that question will be left for later), the French narrator no longer knows what he is feeling:

Je la regardai avec un immense étonnement où se mêlait quelque terreur, mais il me sembla impossible de me rendre compte de mes sentiments.
(Le Dantec 1951: 344, lines 298-300)

I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread – and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings.
(Mabbott 1978: 404, lines 233-235)

For *Littre* “Se rendre compte à soi-même de quelque chose” means “y réfléchir et s’en faire une notion claire” (*Littre* 1: 5426), or, in English, “to realise, to be aware of something” (*Collins* 1998: 182). However, the English narrator knows which feelings he is having, but he cannot figure out where they are coming from. The English narrator is looking for the source of his discomfort, the French narrator cannot even decide what he is feeling.

The French narrator is thus more strongly affected by events, and the effects of the allegory and symbolism contained in Usher’s painting and music seem to be wearing off on him. In fact, the French narrator is so impressed by the strangeness of Usher’s mind that he feels that the terror which it expresses is “irrésistible”, whereas the English narrator has the opposite reaction of finding that terror “intolerable”:

Pour moi, du moins, dans les circonstances qui m’entouraient, – il s’élevait, des pures abstractions que l’hypochondriaque s’ingéniait à jeter sur sa toile, une terreur intense, irrésistible, ...
(Le Dantec 1951: 345, lines 352-354)

For me at least – in the circumstances then surrounding me – there arose out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, ...
(Mabbott 1978: 405, lines 278-284)

With “irrésistible,” the French narrator is more strongly drawn into the awe that reigns in Usher’s mind and all around him. It is therefore not surprising that he will be more strongly affected by it. Indeed, a few days after Madeline’s death and her temporary burial in one of the vaults of the mansion, days during which the narrator has tried to entertain Usher and distract his attention (through reading and painting), the narrator observes a change in Usher’s demeanour, and Usher seems to become, on the whole, more composed. At the same time, the narrator observes in himself the increasingly strong effect which Usher’s moods have on his own. Here, the French narrator has become a victim to such an extent that he appears to be experiencing his state like a disease from which he cannot escape:

Je sentais se glisser en moi, par une gradation lente mais sûre, l'étrange influence de ses superstitions fantastiques et contagieuses.
(Le Dantec 1951: 351, lines 583-586)

I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influence of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.
(Mabbott 1978: 411, lines 470-473)

Whereas the French narrator describes the influence of Usher's thoughts as "contagieuses," an adjective mainly used for diseases that are transferred from one person to another by close contact, the English narrator expresses his admiration for Usher's beliefs, since instead of being afraid of contamination, the English narrator finds them "impressive." "Contagieux" does not contain the sense of admiration implied in "impressive," and even in a figurative sense simply means "Qui se transmet par la fréquentation intense, par la force d'entraînement de l'exemple" (*Trésor* 6: 25). This passage thus shows that the French narrator is less in admiration of Usher's ideas, which he finds dangerous and menacing, and shows a more deprecating attitude towards Usher's ways of thinking.

Later on, when the narrator is describing Usher's features and physique, he notices that Usher is shaking and making vain attempts to stop this uncontrollable trembling of his body. The French translation here clearly gives the narrator a negative and inclement attitude towards Usher, instead of the understanding and the pity which the English narrator displays:

Je fus tout d'abord frappé d'une certaine incohérence ... dans les manières de mon ami, et je découvris bientôt que cela provenait d'un effort incessant, aussi faible que puéril, pour maîtriser une trépidation habituelle.
(Le Dantec 1951: 342, lines 223-225)

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence ... and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome a habitual trepidancy.
(Mabbott 1978: 402, lines 170-173)

That Baudelaire knew that the English "futile" means the same as its French counterpart, is proven later on by his translation of "the futility of all attempts"

(Mabbott 1978: 405, line 260) as “la vanité de tous mes efforts” (Le Dantec 1951: 344, line 329). Baudelaire is here then clearly giving his own slant to the narrator’s relations with Usher, and a narrator who calls his friend’s behaviour “puéril” obviously has little respect and sympathy for that friend.

Another instance of this deprecating attitude occurs when both protagonists are trying to while away the time and distract themselves with music, paintings and literature. When commenting on the paintings that occupy Usher’s interest, the French narrator shows his (moral) disapproval of the kind of mind that can appreciate this highly symbolic and allegorical art, whereas the English version actually shows a contrary attitude on the narrator’s part. This difference, incidentally, also works to create a less imaginative French narrator:

Quant aux peint(u)res que couvait sa laborieuse fantaisie ... j’essaierais vainement d’en extraire un échantillon suffisant, qui pût tenir dans le compas de la parole écrite.

(Le Dantec 1951: 345, lines 345-346)⁵³

From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded ... I would in vain endeavour to educe more than a small portion which could lie within the compass of merely written words.

(Mabbott 1978: 405, lines 272-273)

There is the important grammatical difference between “brooding *over*” an indefinite number of paintings and “couver” those same objects (which would make Usher the creator of all that artwork), but what is more relevant for the discussion here is that Roderick’s “fancy” is called, in English, “elaborate,” which should be understood in its meaning of “worked out in much detail; highly finished” or “conducted with great minuteness” (*OED* 3: 67), whereas Baudelaire’s narrator finds Usher’s “fantaisie” “laborieuse”, i.e. painstaking or complicated. In its pejorative sense, the *Trésor* defines “laborieux” as “Dans lequel on sent l’effort, la recherche, qui manque d’invention, de spontanéité, de simplicité” and gives as synonyms “Complicqué, embarrassé, lourd” (*Trésor* 10: 887). Clearly, then, the French narrator disapproves of Usher’s artistic tastes and

⁵³ Le Dantec’s version here erroneously gives “peintres,” error which is corrected in Richard’s edition and changed into “peintures” (Richard 1989: 412).

creations, and this evidently closes off his mind to the supernatural or esoteric possibilities contained in his surroundings.

A last instance of this derogatory attitude of the narrator towards Usher's "ideality" can be found in the sentence where the narrator wonders whether the story he is about to read to Usher will touch "the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend" (Mabbott 1978: 413, line 539), which Baudelaire translates by "la haute spiritualité de mon ami" (Le Dantec 1951: 353, lines 671-672), thus leaving out the admiration contained in "lofty," which here means "elevated in style or sentiment, sublime, grandiose" (*OED* 6: 397). Moreover, if "haute" is taken to translate "lofty," Baudelaire's sentence leaves out a translation for "ideality" – a word by which the narrator again shows his grasp of the artistic and esoteric sophistication of his friend.

7.5. Interim Conclusions

So far, then, this chapter features a number of examples which show a French narrator who does not trust or control his imagination, and who is therefore less apt at dealing with the strange things that are happening to himself and his surroundings. At the same time, with a self-indulgent sort of confidence, he is more involved in trying to change Usher's condition, and puts himself on more intimate terms with Usher. Whereas Poe's narrator is simply sceptical, the French narrator also has little concern for Usher's artistic imagination, and his attitude to Usher's esoteric and philosophical ideas is one of rejection and moral disapproval. The following description from Darrell Abel would thus apply to the narrator in Poe's text, but not to the one in Baudelaire's translation:

Throughout the tale, alternative explanations, natural and supernatural, of the phenomena are set forth, and we are induced by the consistently maintained device of a common-sense witness, gradually convinced in spite of his determined scepticism, to accept imaginatively the supernatural explanation. (quoted in Mabbott 1978: 395)

Instead, the French narrator does not simply remain a sceptical observer, but becomes, like Usher, a victim of events. Baudelaire's narrator abhors the strangeness of the events, increasingly more so as the tension rises and he becomes more and more affected by the atmosphere in the mansion. Though slowly becoming hysterical with terror, the narrator naïvely continues to cling to reason as his salvation. The French version therefore does not suggest that it may be, from the beginning, the observer-narrator's own mind which distorts things, and that the narrator may be hallucinating or dreaming from the beginning of the story onwards. Instead, the French narrative allows the reader to totally "suspend" his "disbelief," since nothing in the narrator's initial condition or reaction helps to explain the strange things he sees, and his subsequent emotional states are consistent with Usher's state and with the atmosphere of the surroundings. Moreover, the focus of the French version is not so much on what or how the narrator sees and perceives, but on his judgment of Usher's state, i.e. on Usher himself. The narrator's impressions and feelings are thus simply a consequence of the events described, and no *hypothesis* is put forward to make his bizarre experience more acceptable.

"La chute de la Maison Usher" would therefore be categorized, according to the distinction exposed in Chapter Five, as a tale which is to be read as entirely non-thetical. This means that the inexplicable (or supernatural) is taken to simply occur as part of the fiction, without the author having to posit any "thesis" of plausibility – such as, for instance, the idea that the narrator is dreaming, or hallucinating the whole story. The reader of the French version finds a gothic tale, a gloomy allegory on a desperate fight against extinction, a purely fictional story decorated with symbolism and esoteric notions. He is expected to step into the narrator's shoes, observe and share his terror, and leave the scene simply in abhorrence at the cruelty of a family's fate, because the narrator is seen, until the end, to reject and even despise any supernatural and esoteric interpretation and to consider Usher's condition simply as a contagious mental disease. Though the narrator is strongly affected, the thesis that he could be hallucinating the whole story, or seeing it in a dream, is difficult to uphold, because he sounds too

hysterical and too emotionally involved in Usher's problems to suggest either of these states. This seems to be the interpretation arrived at by Pinto, a reader of the French version:

Plus raisonnable que Roderick et cependant contaminé et infesté par ses affects, il est un témoin un peu trop impliqué dans la maison pour être un spectateur impartial de sa chute. De par son statut à l'intérieur de la nouvelle, il est chargé d'une narration qui a à dévoiler comme à couvrir. (Pinto 1983: 138)

The English version, on the other hand, presents the possibility that the narrator's fancy takes over, and that his reason is affected by it from the very beginning of the story. Though the English narrator is also influenced by his surroundings and by Usher's presence, and though his reactions also change accordingly, his imagination works until the end as a saving grace. It somehow helps him to deal with events, and when the inexplicable arises, the reader is therefore forced to believe that something must have also happened to the narrator's capacity for observation. Walker, a reader of the English text, believes that the narrator is affected by the vapours that rise up from the tarn in front of the house – what was called, by the nineteenth-century scientist Thomas Upham, “febrile miasma” (Walker 1971: 50). In that sense, the English version shows that “Poe is also careful to make the whole episode incredible when viewed rationally” (Walker 1993: 117), an effect which is impossible to perceive with a rational and pedantic narrator – who is already trying to view things rationally in the reader's stead.

The same type of reading is found in Hill, who describes the final reactions of the narrator:

The greater cause for acceptance comes from the narrator himself, for he too believes the returned Madeline is the real Madeline. He does not realise that Madeline is an apparition, for by the end of the story he is insane enough to conjure a hallucination too. (Hill 1971: 56)

Kinhead-Weekes' analysis of the story indicates that, at least as far as the English version is concerned, this story cannot be read as a gothic tale:

The story itself tells us how to read it: not as an indulgence in the Gothick, but as an imaginatively critical exploration into the implications, the fascinations, and the price of the Gothick artist's over-development of imaginative sensationalism at the expense of body, thought, and spirit. (Kinkead-Weekes 1987: 33)

Usher's "over-development of imaginative sensationalism" may be present in Baudelaire's version, but the fact that the narrator himself deprecates this inside the story, takes away the possibility of reading the French narrative as a story that invites "a peculiarly double kind of reading response, at once attuned to the depressive qualities of the story, yet aware that we are being asked to think and to feel more than simply 'sensation'" (Kinkead-Weekes 1987: 18). Lastly, reference can be made to Bieganowski, like Kinkead-Weekes a reader of the English version, who indicates the possibility that the whole story is a dream of the narrator's:

Only at the end does the narrative focus strengthen to reveal that for the duration of the story the narrator, still standing at the tarn's edge, has been contemplating the image of the house reflected in the water. (Bieganowski 1988: 172)

That the first sentence of Baudelaire's translation already changes the narrator's contemplative mood and the way he perceives things, illustrates the extent to which the symbolic and suggestive impact of a story where the beginning and the ending are indeed very closely connected, can be weakened. However, other translational choices contribute to this effect, and these alterations are the topic of the next section.

7.6. The Pitfalls of Symmetry and Sentience

The allegorical play on the links between the Usher family and their mansion in "The Fall of the House of Usher" is an accepted fact for most authors who comment on the story, whether they consider the story to be a tale of incest (Kaplan 1993), or of the possibility of miasmatic poisoning (Richard 1989: 65 and

Walker 1971), or whether they are concerned with the story's symbolism (Wilbur 1959), everyone agrees that mansion and family are connected so as to evolve symmetrically.⁵⁴ Moreover, the idea of sentience, which the narrator implies in his musings when first looking at the mansion's reflection in the tarn, and which Roderick Usher launches more explicitly later on, supports a general amalgamation of organic and inorganic things and also works symmetrically: in "The Fall of the House of Usher," the notion of sentience attributes life to inorganic things on the one hand, and takes life away from organic things on the other. The plants are dying, as are the living remainders of the Usher line – Madeline and Roderick – whereas the stones, the windows and the interior of the house seem gradually – and temporarily – to come to life.

The play on symmetry and inverted symmetry does not limit itself to the connection between mansion and family, or organic and inorganic things: in every detail of the narrative, signs can be found of the corresponding states in which other elements (objects, people or atmospheres) also find themselves. An additional symmetrical dimension appears, for instance, when Usher's twin sister is introduced into the plot, and the ambiguous part which she plays in the story allows us to see her as Usher's double. Another symmetrical layer can be added to Usher's persona when one considers the possibility that the whole story happens in the narrator's mind, as suggested, for instance, in Bieganowski 1988, Wilbur 1959 and Brown 1995. That means that Usher, his house and his sister are all symmetrical images of the narrator's own mind, something which the presence of the allegorical poem "The Haunted Palace" is taken to suggest.

7.6.1. Sentience

There are several occasions on which Baudelaire enlarges the effects of Usher's hypothesis on sentience, and most of these appear at the beginning of his

⁵⁴ In case the reader wonders how Claude Richard can arrive at the conclusion that the narrator is hallucinating, I remind him/her that Richard based his comments on a mix of the French and the English version.

translation, long before Usher has a chance to announce his theories explicitly to the narrator. Baudelaire thus anticipates on the plot, not only by introducing more personifications, but also by adding, like Forgues was seen to do in the previous chapter, a slightly more sinister atmosphere. Here are the opening lines of both versions:

Pendant toute une journée d'automne, journée fuligineuse, sombre et muette, où les nuages pesaient lourds et bas dans le ciel, j'avais traversé seul et à cheval une étendue de pays singulièrement lugubre, et enfin, comme les ombres du soir approchaient, je me trouvai en vue de la mélancolique Maison Usher.

(Le Dantec 1951: 337, lines 1-6)

During the whole of a dull, dark and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher.

(Mabbott 1978: 397, lines 1-6)

One sees Baudelaire personifying things that are “non-human” in the original: the day’s soundlessness is translated by “muette,” which applies to people in the first place, and the day is also described by a term which originally applied to a medical condition: “fuligineux” is a “Terme de médecine. Lèvre, langue fuligineuses; lèvre, langue couverte d’un enduit noirâtre ... Vapeurs fuligineuses, exhalations épaisses qu’on supposait partir du foie, de la rate, et obscurcir le cerveau” (*Littre* 2: 2661). The clouds also have more volition in French, as they are said to be not just “hanging” in the sky, instead they “pesaient.” Moreover, the translation of “dreary” by “lugubre” also shows Baudelaire adding a more sinister atmosphere from the opening paragraphs onwards, as “lugubre” has associations with death and sadness which “dreary” no longer has (*OED* gives as obsolete meanings for “dreary” “gory, bloody” and also “cruel, dire, horrid, grievous,” but the modern meaning is “dismal, gloomy, repulsively dull or uninteresting” (*OED* 3: 657), whereas *Littre* gives for “lugubre”: “Qui est signe de deuil ... Qui marque, qui inspire des larmes, la douleur” (*Littre* 3: 3597). Furthermore, in English, the shades “drew on,” i.e. they were getting longer, whereas in French, they are more menacing as they “approchaient” the narrator.

One thus observes how Baudelaire, in this first sentence, adds to the idea of sentience, and increases its suggestive presence. This contrasts with what he does in the last sentence of the story (which, as Bieganowski indicated, is closely connected to the opening one), where he actually diminishes the personified aspects of the scene. Moreover, certain details in the translation here show that Baudelaire was not necessarily aware of the full import of this last sentence:

Il se fit un bruit prolongé, un fracas tumultueux comme la voix de mille cataractes, – et l'étang profond et croupi placé à mes pieds se referma tristement et silencieusement sur les ruines de la Maison Usher.
(Le Dantec 1951: 357, lines 839-842 – in italics in the text)

... – there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters – and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the House of Usher.
(Mabbott 1978: 417, lines 677-680)

Whereas Baudelaire had added to the personifications in the initial sentence of the story, he here diminishes that effect by omitting to translate the “shouting” aspect of the sound – he could easily have used “hurlant,” for instance, for that purpose. Baudelaire also neglects certain details of the description: what the English narrator sees disappearing into the tarn are not “ruines,” but “fragments” (a “ruine” being something that has been empty and in decay for ages). The poetic simile “like the sound of a thousand waters,” which Mabbott points out is reminiscent of the phrase “the voice of many waters” in *Ezekiel* and *Revelation*, and also occurs in “The Conversation of Eiros and Chamion” (Mabbott 1978: 422, note 34), is here translated by “cataractes,” a phenomenon which changes the picture by adding a new dynamic but non-human element. These are the two instances where Baudelaire’s deviations from Poe’s play on sentience are the most visibly inconsistent. Even though other occurrences of the play on the idea of sentience can be found slightly altered, and usually exaggerated in Baudelaire’s version, it should be stated at this point that the translation, probably because of its literalism, transfers the play on sentience more or less as it is found in the original text. Considering how Baudelaire has already been seen to handle the

similarities between the opening and closing sentence of the story, it may not come as a surprise that the same cannot be said of Poe's play on symmetry, which will now be examined.

7.6.2. Symmetry and Inverted Symmetry

Before going into a number of "minor" occurrences of the play on symmetry, a particular occurrence of this stylistic device, which suggests, at least in the English text, the possibility of Madeline being Usher's double, should be taken up first. When the narrator finally arrives at Usher's chamber, and is "ushered in," he hardly recognizes his childhood friend and says:

Ce n'était qu'avec peine que je pouvais consentir à admettre l'identité de l'homme placé en face de moi avec le compagnon de mes premières années.

(Le Dantec 1951: 341, lines 195-197)

It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood.

(Mabbott 1978: 401, lines 150-151)

It is difficult to say what made Baudelaire decide to change the original contents, but the possibility of his not having understood the noun phrase "the wan being" must be taken into account. Combined with the following example, however, it seems more likely that he wanted to make sure that the reader could not amalgamate Usher with anyone else, and to make his masculinity explicit. Whereas the possibility for confusion is created twice in the English version, Baudelaire refuses to translate that ambiguity, showing clearly that for him, Usher is not to be amalgamated with his twin sister (or anyone else in the story):

Mais actuellement, dans la simple exagération du caractère de cette figure, et de l'expression qu'elle présentait actuellement, je doutais de l'homme à qui je parlais. (Le Dantec 1951: 342, lines 210-213)

And now, in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke.
(Mabbott 1978: 402, lines 161-164)

This sentence not only contains evidence that omissions were also part of Baudelaire's translation strategies (nothing in the French text reproduces the emphatic "lay so much of change that"). More relevant is Baudelaire's translation of "whom" by "l'homme," which again makes explicit an ambiguity which, I would venture to claim, does not appear in the original by accident.

A last instance of this play on the possibility of Madeline being Usher's (and the narrator's) double is found in Usher's ballad "The Haunted Palace," which features a palace that is the allegorical representation of Usher's decaying mind. The link with Madeline's recent burial is established in the phrase "the old time entombed" (Mabbott 1978: 407, line 355), which Baudelaire translates as "des vieux âges défunts" (Le Dantec 1951: 347, line 440), thus obscuring the connection between the two entombments. These examples suggest that Baudelaire did not wish to reproduce all the subtleties of the play on symmetry, especially when they functioned to suggest that Usher and Madeline were doubles.

Another expression of the pervading symmetry, are the mirror images which are introduced from the beginning of the story, when the narrator looks at the reflection of the mansion in the "lurid black tarn" that lies before it. The fissure which he observes running from top to bottom through the facade can be taken to represent his own and/or Usher's disintegrating mind and personality, but it also suggests Usher's lingering between two sides: on the border between life and death, between sanity and insanity, and between reality and fiction. The fissure could also be seen as symbolizing the division between Usher and his twin sister, the one dying, the other, sensing that his twin's death will entail the destruction of both the mansion and the family, desperately clinging to life. What follows are two separate passages which suggest a connection between mansion and family, and also between the mansion and the surroundings on which it has a decaying

influence. The two passages are presented together because they describe the same elements, once observed directly, and once through their reflection in the tarn:

Je regardais le tableau placé devant moi, et, rien qu'à voir la maison et la perspective caractéristique de ce domaine, – les murs qui avaient froid, – les fenêtres semblables à des yeux distraits, – quelques bouquets de joncs vigoureux, – quelques troncs d'arbres blancs et dépéris, ...

(Le Dantec 1951: 337, lines 14-19)

and:

... je conduisis mon cheval vers le bord escarpé d'un noir et lugubre étang, qui, miroir immobile, s'étalait devant le bâtiment; et je regardai – mais avec un frisson plus pénétrant encore que la première fois – les images répercutées et renversées des joncs grisâtres, des troncs d'arbres sinistres, et des fenêtres semblables à des yeux sans pensée.

(Le Dantec 1951: 338, lines 41-47)

I looked upon the scene before me – upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain – upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eye-like windows – upon a few rank sedges – and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees

(Mabbott 1978: 397, lines 10-14)

and:

... I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down – but with a shudder even more thrilling than before – upon the remodelled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant eye-like windows.

(Mabbott 1978: 398, lines 32-36)

The thing to notice in these two passages is how “quelques bouquets de joncs vigoureux” can become, only a page later “joncs grisâtres.” “Joncs vigoureux” does not translate in any way “a few rank sedges,” as “vigoureux” means “Qui a de la vigueur physique” (*Littre* 4: 6691). One could also note that the addition of “bouquet” adds too much elegance to these sedges. The presence of “vigoureux” is especially disturbing because the scene is again described in the second

passage, and here the “gray sedge” is translated by “joncs grisâtres.” The result for the translation is not only that it rules out the play on symmetry, but also that it introduces an inconsistency in the translated text which is likely to confuse the reader. A second remark can be made on the translation of the verb phrase “remodelled and inverted,” which Baudelaire translates as “répercutées et renversées.” Whereas “répercuter” means “réfléchir, renvoyer” (*Littre* 4: 5458), “remodelled” means more than that: the image of the house is not only reflected, but also deformed or “reconstruct(ed)” (*OED* 8: 431).

Two additional remarks should be made here in the margin of this discussion on the play on symmetry. Firstly, Baudelaire can again be seen to subtly increase the sinister effect of the atmosphere, when he translates “black and lurid tarn” by “noir et lugubre étang.” Though “lurid” has connotations of “terrible,” “ominous,” and “ghastly” (*OED* 6: 509), it should here be understood in a sense that refers to the way in which it reflects things – Poe is, after all, talking about a reflection in that tarn – i.e. in its sense of “shining with a red glow or glare amid darkness (said e.g. of lightning flashes across dark clouds, or flames mingled with smoke)” (*OED* 6: 509). “Lugubre” thus constitutes an increase in the morbidity of the scene.

A second example of the play on symmetry is taken from the passage where the narrator, having already considered the “perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people,” and having fallen into a short reverie about this possibility, is scanning the building carefully, and notices an inconsistency in the impression it makes on him. This description, incidentally, is, like the castle in “The Haunted Palace,” again formulated in a way which makes the house resemble a human head:

Son caractère dominant [du bâtiment] semblait être celui d'une excessive antiquité. La décoloration produite par les siècles était grande. De menues fongosités recouvraient toute la face extérieure et la tapissaient, à partir du toit, comme une étoffe curieusement brodée. Mais tout cela n'impliquait pas une détérioration extraordinaire. Aucune partie de la maçonnerie n'était tombée, et il semblait qu'il y eût une contradiction étrange entre la

consistance générale intacte de toutes ses parties et l'état particulier des pierres émiettées.

(Le Dantec 1951: 340, lines 124-133)

Its [the building's] principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine, tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen, and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts, and the crumbling condition of the individual stones.

(Mabbott 1978: 400, lines 95-102)

Besides a number of details, such as the very literal translation of "minute fungi" by "de menues fongosités" and "excessive antiquity" by "excessive antiquité," it is especially the last sentence which is of interest here. What Poe's narrator says is that on first glance, the building seems old, but not yet in ruins, and it is only on closer inspection that it becomes clear that the parts of which it is constituted are completely decayed, and that the building is thus, as it were, rotting away from the inside. Indeed, the comparison Poe draws is with that of "the specious totality of old wood-work which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air" (Mabbott 1978: 400, lines 102-105). Baudelaire's version, however, does not clearly present a contrast between the whole and its parts, because "consistance générale intacte de toutes ses parties" does not necessarily refer to the whole of the structure, but can be taken to refer to the (generally intact) state of its parts. "Consistance," in *Littré*, is defined as "état de stabilité, de solidité," (*Littré* 1:1123) and the *Trésor* defines it as "Etat d'un corps solide dont les parties constituent un tout envisagé du point de vue de son homogénéité, de sa cohérence, de sa compacité, de sa résistance" (*Trésor* 5: 1396). Neither of these definitions bring one any closer to "adaptation of parts," i.e. to the way in which the parts fit together to make a whole, and the presence of "intacte" also indicates that "consistance" can actually be taken to refer to the state of the *individual* stones. The inversed symmetry between the parts and the whole is thus lost in the French version.

The interior of the House of Usher also contains all kinds of elements that allow the reader to see a symmetrical relation between the house and the mind of Usher. Wilbur here finds one of the leitmotifs that frequently appear in Poe's fiction:

The most important of these recurrent motifs is that of enclosure or circumscription; perhaps the latter term is preferable, because it is Poe's own word, and because Poe's enclosures are so often more or less circular in form. (Wilbur 1959: 260)

The enclosures which constitute the interior of the mansion, would thus represent Usher's (and possibly the narrator's) mind, and "The Fall of the House of Usher" can therefore be read as a dream of the narrator's, or an expression of the hypnagogic state in which the disintegration of Usher's mind represents the narrator's own mental breakdown, because Wilbur also says that "circumscription, in Poe's tales, means the exclusion from consciousness of the so-called real world, the world of time and reason and fact; it means the isolation of the poetic soul in visionary reverie or trance" (Wilbur 1959: 261). In "The Fall of the House of Usher" the mansion thus symbolizes Usher's mind in the process of "dreaming his way out of the world" (Wilbur 1959: 261).

The interior of the house should therefore resemble, albeit in a dream-like manner, the inside of Usher's mind. Indeed, like the tarn's lurid reflection, the light inside the mansion is tainted red, the windows (i.e. the eyes) are so high up that it is impossible to look outside through them, there are intricate passages and corners wherein the objects are barely perceptible, and books and instruments lay scattered about. For Wilbur, "Roderick Usher's library, for instance, with its rare and precious volumes belonging to all times and tongues, is another concrete symbol of the timelessness and placelessness of the dreaming mind" (Wilbur 1959: 172). The translation of the following relevant passage again follows the original very closely and literally, but there is an allusion of decay which Baudelaire leaves out:

... l'œil néanmoins s'efforçait en vain d'atteindre les angles lointains de la chambre ou les enfoncements du plafond arrondi en voûte et sculpté. De sombres draperies tapissaient les murs.
(Le Dantec 1951: 341, lines 172-176)

... the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remote angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. (Mabbott 1978: 401, lines 134-136)

It can firstly be remarked that for the second time, Baudelaire uses “tapisser” where Poe used the verb “hang,” which entails that the translation makes it more difficult to perceive the personification of the house, as the draperies, which in the English version hang as hair around a face, are here the agents of a verb that works for wall decorations, but not for hair. Secondly, the past participle “fretted,” refers to “the cutting of wood with a fret saw into ornamental designs” (*OED* 4: 539), but also confers the meaning of a mind in turmoil, which, obviously, is not repeated in “sculpté.” “Sculpté,” moreover, gives a certain elegance to the ceilings which is not present in the original.

Another occurrence of symmetry, which entirely disappears in the French version, can be taken as a continuation of Baudelaire’s strategy of reducing the ambiguity which would allow the reader to confuse Roderick and Madeline Usher. The ambiguity is in this case established in English by a subtle choice of words, which, however, is ignored by Baudelaire. The scene occurs after Madeline’s death, when the narrator and Roderick are placing her dead body in her temporary resting place, a vault in the castle:

Nous déposâmes donc notre fardeau funèbre sur des tréteaux dans cette région d'horreur; nous tournâmes un peu de côté le couvercle de la bière qui n'était pas encore vissée, et nous regardâmes la face du cadavre.
(Le Dantec 1951: 350, lines 541-544)

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant.
(Mabbott 1978: 410, lines 438-440)

Baudelaire here heightened the horror effect, first by using “funèbre” for “mournful,” which increases the graveyard atmosphere – its first meaning, as *Litttré* confirms, involves burials: “Qui appartient aux funérailles,” (*Litttré* 2: 2667) whereas “mournful” can, but does not have to, involve graveyards. More importantly, Baudelaire uses the term “cadavre” where Poe wrote “tenant” – an odd but meaningful choice of words to describe a corpse in a coffin. Baudelaire’s explicit translation, moreover, is all the more disturbing as the term “tenant” had already occurred before, in order to refer to Usher himself:

Il était dominé par certaines impressions superstitieuses relatives au manoir qu’il habitait, et d’où il n’avait pas osé sortir depuis plusieurs années.
(Le Dantec 1951: 343, lines 273-276)

He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth.
(Mabbott 1978: 403, lines 213-215)

Not only, then, does Baudelaire again make the morbidity of the situation more explicit, by his use of “funèbre” and “cadavre,” but he again cancels the possibility that Usher and Madeline, both “tenants” of the House of Usher, which will also be their common grave, are one and the same person.

There are a number of occasions where Baudelaire thus diminishes the suggestive ambiguity of the narrator’s descriptions, and where he chooses a more explicit and gothic type of morbidity and horror. When Roderick talks about his sister’s approaching death, for instance, Poe uses the words “dissolution” (Mabbott 1978: 403-404, line 226-227) and “decease” (Mabbott 1978: 404, line 229), which Baudelaire twice translates by the more prosaic “mort” (Le Dantec 1951: 344, line 289 and 292). Sometimes the increased morbidity is constituted by a pure addition, as in the translation of “an excited and highly distempered ideality” (Mabbott 1979: 405, lines 268-269) by “une idéalité ardente, excessive, morbide” (Le Dantec 1951: 345, lines 339-340), and on other occasions it appears as a wholly inadequate translation: a “tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night” (Mabbott 1979: 412, line 512) thus becomes “une nuit d’orage affreusement

belle” (Le Dantec 1951: 352, lines 638-639) and “some bitter struggle” (Mabbott 1979: 416, line 659) is translated as “quelque horrible lutte” (Le Dantec 1951: 356, line 817).

Baudelaire’s treatment of the suggestive undertones of this arabesque have thus been overviewed, and two conclusions can be drawn from this: firstly, as I have just shown, Baudelaire cranks up the morbidity and horror which Poe preferred to present in a more subtle and suggestive manner, and secondly, some of the instances where Poe is aiming at constructing symmetry, are not reproduced in the translation. In the beginning of “La chute de la Maison Usher” Baudelaire runs ahead of the narrator in suggesting the idea of sentience by personifying things that are not (yet) personified in the original, and by introducing a few inconsistencies in the descriptions of the scenes, whereas at the end of the story, where the idea of sentience is confirmed by the collapsing house, the personified aspect is omitted. Whereas in the English version, the narrator’s adumbrations on the idea of sentience gradually increase to culminate in his hearing a “shouting” sound at the end, an increase which also works to undermine his scepticism and prepare him for more “imaginative” and esoteric explanations, this subtle increase is not maintained in the French text.

This difference can be linked up with what has been said about the French narrator’s perceptions, in the sense that it helps to push the story in an even less thetical direction. This is because the French narrator, who is a perplexed witness and victim of events, ignores some of the suggestive elements that help, in the English version, to support the dream-like and allegorical quality of his experiences. In other words, in French the force of the undertone that is built up by the play on symmetry and inverted symmetry is weakened in strategic places (e.g. in the course of the initial and final description of the mansion), and this also weakens the suggestive impact of the story. The symbolism and allegory that is present in the original tends to become mere ornamentation in the French version, and the allusions to esoteric possibilities are either too explicit, or received by too much moral disapproval on the narrator’s part.

This chapter thus features a number of translational choices which support the idea that this tale changed genre in translation, and went from being a fantastic tale (i.e. an arabesque, a thetical narrative) to a gothic tale (i.e. a non-thetical narrative) in the French translation. The connections between that tendency and certain aspects of Baudelaire's position, stance, project and horizon can now be established.

7.7. Conclusions: Answering Berman's questions and tracing the translator's stance, project and horizon in the translation

The following conclusion is subdivided in four sections, each of the first three sections referring to one of the "pre-reading" questions put forward by Berman (see Chapter Three), and the last question pulling together the data resulting from the analysis of the translation, with what we know about Baudelaire's position, stance, project and literary and translational horizons.

7.7.1. Question One

To Berman's first question, whether the translation is linguistically and structurally cohesive, the answer can now be given that certain inconsistencies in Baudelaire's translation mar the cohesion of the French text, especially when it comes to maintaining the play on symmetry and the suggestive undertones that this creates. However, a certain consistency, or rather, a consistent tendency can be found in Baudelaire's translational choices, particularly visible in the translation of the narrator's perceptions and feelings, his interaction with Usher and his rejection of the latter's more esoteric explanations for the bizarre events in the story. These alterations, turning the narrator into a victim of events and emotions over which he has little control, pull the narrative in a non-thetical (i.e. gothic) direction, where no hypothesis can be put forward regarding the narrator's

own physical or mental condition that may help to explain the strangeness of his observations.

7.7.2. Question Two

Berman's second question, whether the translator has "written foreign," can also be answered now. As was seen in the previous chapter, Baudelaire was already accused of writing "neologistic" and unidiomatic French in his own days. The translation actually features a Baudelaire neologism: "extranaturel," a word which Baudelaire coined to translate "supernatural." The *Trésor* indicates that Baudelaire is at the origin of this word in French, though its occurrence in "La chute de la Maison Usher" must have been overlooked, because the *Trésor* states its first appearance to have been in the *Paradis artificiels* which came out in 1860, three years after the *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires*, in which "La chute de la Maison Usher" appeared. Incidentally, the *Trésor* gives the following definition for Baudelaire's word: "Qui sort de la nature, qui a une origine autre que naturelle" (*Trésor* 8: 529) and when one compares this with the meaning of the French word "supernaturel" ("Qui relève d'un autre ordre que de la nature, qui n'est pas explicable naturellement" (*Trésor* 15: 1108)), one realizes that Baudelaire's coining of "extranaturel" is motivated by a desire to use a more "recherché" word where there was already one available. This is a first instance where the foreignising effect is artificial and results from a willed strategy of Baudelaire's to "sound foreign."

The answer to the question whether Baudelaire has "written foreign" can thus begin to be formed. The closeness of Baudelaire's translation can sometimes be called extreme. Baudelaire did not only "neologise;" he often opted for less-than-idiomatic translations even if a more idiomatic option was readily available, and this also increases the foreignising effect of his text. This would license the remark that this tends to be the "poor" type of literalism as defined in Chapter Two, in the sense that the foreignising effect is obtained by a type of literalism

which was described in that chapter as creating “an illusion of foreignness by simply sounding strange.” Examples of this forced foreignising abound in Baudelaire’s translation, and sometimes this strategy gives very questionable results. The translations of “It was no wonder that his condition terrified – that it infected me” (Mabbott 1978: 348, line 470-471) by “Il ne faut pas s’étonner que son état m’effrayât, – qu’il m’infectât même” (Le Dantec 1951: 351, line 583-584) is certainly doubtful, and provoked a footnote from Richard in which he states that “Baudelaire se laisse prendre au piège du faux ami” (Richard 1989: 1352 note 38).

As the extracts have also shown, Baudelaire thus frequently opts for direct equivalents for English words of Latin origin, and often places the adjective before the noun, a grammatical device which in French helps to give an “English” accent to noun phrases. A few examples which combine these two strategies are: sojourn/séjourner (line 38/49), singular impression/singulière impression (78/102), affinity/affinité (90/117), an excessive antiquity/une excessive antiquité (96/125), minute fungi/(de) menues fongosités (97/126) and the sombre tapestries/les sombres tapisseries (118-119/152). This type of word-for word translation is what also strongly enhances the impression of Baudelaire’s “writing foreign.”

7.7.3. Question Three

To the question whether the text contains zones or parts where it “come into its own,” i.e. parts of the text that are marked stylistically or linguistically, and that thus typify the text, the answer is more problematic. As indicated above, the beginning and opening paragraphs of the original are closely linked through a number of symbolic elements, and all the suggestions of the first paragraph find their culmination in the last, but the translation lacks this effect. However, there is a passage in the translation which may strike the reader as a textual zone that stands out in a positive way. This paragraph would also have been of special

interest to Baudelaire: it is the passage where the narrator describes Usher's face, and certain features of this description correspond to Baudelaire's picture of Poe. Remembering what was demonstrated in Chapter Four, namely that Baudelaire identified Poe with the characters in his stories, he would naturally have identified Poe with Roderick Usher. Certain similarities can be found between the description of Usher and the one Baudelaire gave of Poe, and which is a close copy of Daniel's picture of Poe. In any case, the resemblances which Baudelaire must have found between his image of Poe's face, and Roderick Usher, can explain why this paragraph is so adequately written and translated:

Un teint cadavéreux, – un œil large, liquide et lumineux au delà de toute comparaison, – des lèvres un peu minces et très pâles, mais d'une courbe merveilleusement belle, – un nez d'un moule hébraïque, très délicat, mais d'une ampleur de narines qui s'accorde rarement avec une pareille forme, – un menton d'un modèle charmant, mais qui, par un manque de saillie, trahissait un manque d'énergie morale, – des cheveux d'une douceur et d'une ténuité plus qu'arachnéennes, – tous ces traits, auxquels il faut ajouter un développement frontal excessif, lui faisaient une physionomie qui n'était pas facile d'oublier. (Le Dantec 1951: 342, lines 198-210)

A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely moulded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity; these features, with an inordinate expansion above the region of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten.
(Mabbott 1978: 401-402, lines 153-161)

Though the punctuation changes and Poe's commas are replaced by hyphens *and* commas, Baudelaire keeps the pace of this paragraph, and reproduces all the contrasts (i.e. inverted symmetries) in it. There are no lexical differences which would affect the register, and moreover, this is the only instance in the whole of the translation where Baudelaire maintains most of the original alliterations (except for "cadaverousness of complexion," that is). Other alliterations feature in the text, which were not translated alliteratively: "dull, dark and soundless day" ("journée fuligineuse, sombre et muette") (1/1-2), "sullenly and silently" ("tristement et silencieusement") (680/841-842), to which the following "sinking,

sickening of the heart,” translated as “un abattement, un malaise” (18/14) can be added. It is remarkable, moreover, that all these alliterations occur either in the initial or in the final description of the mansion – which again shows that Baudelaire was not necessarily aware that the beginning and the ending of this story were intricately linked, and that Poe had aimed for this cohesion by increasing the poetic effect of these paragraphs. Anticipating what will be said in the final conclusion to this chapter, it may be added that the contrast between the heightened precision when it comes to translating a paragraph such as the one just introduced, and the rather less precise translation of other parts of the story, in turn implies that Baudelaire was motivated in his translation by those aspects of Poe which interested him personally, even if these were not the focus of Poe’s attention in the original text. The passage above could thus be described as one where Baudelaire’s translation comes into its own, and where, moreover, it can be connected to other texts in Baudelaire’s writing on Poe.

7.7.4. Question Four

Berman’s question here was whether the observations and conclusions emanating from the pre-reading activities can be linked up with aspects of Baudelaire’s position, stance, project and horizon as a translator. For the sake of clarity this question will be answered in four separate sections.

7.7.4.1. Traces of Baudelaire’s Position as a Translator

As far as Baudelaire’s position is concerned, a number of connections can be established between how he translated “Usher” and his position as a translator, as described in Chapter Four. Baudelaire, whose admiration for the representatives and the literature of the *bousingots* was discussed in Chapter Four for existing long before he discovered Poe, found a number of the topoï which he knew from his readings of the “jeunes-France,” in “The Fall of the House of Usher”: a

doomed aristocrat who is also a (damned) poet, a haunted castle, Madeline's "resurrection," the esoteric idea of sentience, these are all topics with which he was familiar from his readings of, for instance, Théophile Gautier's or Pétrus Borel's stories. This is a first factor which may have counted in the alterations which have been uncovered, in the sense that in stories such as Borel's *Le lycantrophe* or Gautier's *La morte amoureuse* and *Le pied de la momie*, there is no thesis of plausibility, supernatural characters and events are simply part of the story, and mysteries and occultism feature in a non-thetical (or gothic) narrative.

Baudelaire's attachment to and preference for *bousingot* literature would thus have worked to push his translational choices in a direction which made 'The Fall of the House of Usher' a more "frenetic" and less fantastic story. The fact that Baudelaire's narrator is a secondary character, and equally becomes a victim of events, cancels the possibility of seeing him as a deranged narrator in a fantastic tale, and Baudelaire's sometimes negligent treatment of the play on symmetry also rules out a reading of the story as an arabesque, containing those undertones which suggest possibilities that do not appear in the translation. This also shows that Baudelaire's focus is on the person who interested him the most in this story: Roderick Usher. Indeed, Baudelaire's Usher is the personification of another of Baudelaire's favourite characters presented in Chapter Four: the *poète maudit*. Usher's composition of "The Haunted Palace" makes him a poet, and his aristocratic background and artistic and philosophical extravagance also give him the necessary features. That Baudelaire's attention thus first went to the main protagonist of the story is not all that surprising, and the minuteness of his description of the features of Usher – a passage in which he omits nothing – confirms this.

Baudelaire's admiration for the literature of the *bousingots* also lies at the basis of the increase in the explicit morbidity, discussed in section 7.6.2. Even Gautier's *Onuphrius*, though a thetical tale, contains an explicit and grotesque type of horror that is very different from Poe's symbolic and structural devices which suggest the undercurrents of meaning in "The Fall of the House of Usher." Baudelaire

may thus have wanted to translate literally, but he also added ingredients which belonged to his own literary background and preferences, specifically elements of *bousingot* literature.

7.7.4.2. Traces of Baudelaire's Stance

The text of the translation, which, as was indicated, is our final source of information to define Baudelaire's stance as a translator, shows that what Baudelaire stated as a project for his translations of Poe (i.e. a high degree of literalism) was also a part of his stance. However, the deviations from this project show that Baudelaire's real stance is actually somewhere in the middle: on the one hand, he does stay very close to the original, but on the other hand he adds details which increase the sensational aspect of the text, which diminish its symbolic impact, and which change the point of view of the narrator (for the reasons given above). Baudelaire's stance could therefore be described as follows: besides trying to give as close a translation as possible, Baudelaire clearly thought that the translator should be completely permeated by the original author's personality, and should translate according to what the author represented for him. If the author was not considered an extremely funny man, neither should his translation be, and if the author was (supposedly) a gloomy and perverse figure, his translation should reflect that too. In other words, if Baudelaire had a stance, it aimed at a translation which reproduces the original quite literally, while at the same time reflecting the supposed personality of the original author.

7.7.4.3. Traces of Baudelaire's Project

The explicit part of Baudelaire's project for the translation of Poe, namely his expressed intention to translate literally at the risk of producing a "baroque" French, has already been discussed under question two.

As was shown in Chapter Four, a consequence of Baudelaire's distorted image of Poe was that Poe was considered a marginal figure of American literature, and that he was thought to have only detractors in the American literary establishment. If, as was also shown, it is likely that Baudelaire identified Poe with Roderick Usher, then Baudelaire's narrator can be identified with that American audience which treated Poe's work with so much deprecation. This could explain why the French narrator's attitude towards Usher's "elaborate fancy" is so negative and moralising, and why he shows so much less interest in the imaginative and esoteric side of Usher.

Another aspect of Baudelaire's explicitly stated project was to introduce Poe in a manner which would increase his own literary status by connecting himself closely to Poe, in the same way as Loève-Veimars had managed to introduce Hoffmann. This also entailed that Baudelaire would continue to confirm the distorted image which he had created for his author – and if he could do so, would slip certain details of that image into the translation. Such a detail can be found in "La chute de la Maison Usher." Chapter Five featured a discussion which revealed that it was Baudelaire's conviction that Poe was an alcoholic and opium addict – and that this was part of Poe's being, like Baudelaire, a *poète maudit*. Opium and alcohol feature twice in "The Fall of the House of Usher," and in the following example opium-eating appears in a simile which serves to describe Usher's incoherent and agitated way of speaking:

... that leaden, self-balanced and perfectly modulated guttural utterance, which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.
(Mabbott 1978: 402, lines 181-184)

Now, a narrator who talks about a "lost" drunkard implies that drunkards are sad and pitiable people who cannot be retrieved. Similarly, a narrator who talks about an "irreclaimable" opium eater, thinks that opium eaters should be reclaimed in the first place, i.e. that they are suffering from their addiction of which, unfortunately, they can no longer be cured. This is not, however, the impression one gets from Baudelaire's narrator:

... ce parler guttural et rude, parfaitement balancé et modulé, qu'on peut observer chez le parfait ivrogne ou l'incorrigible mangeur d'opium pendant les périodes de leur plus intense excitation.
(Le Dantec 1951: 342, lines 235-237)

Instead of a “lost drunkard” Baudelaire’s narrator talks about a “parfait ivrogne.” By anteposing “parfait,” he introduces, as the *Trésor* indicates, an ironic effect: “En antéposition, avec une nuance ironique: qui présente pleinement les caractères, notamment négatifs, qui lui sont propres” (*Trésor* 12: 992). A “parfait ivrogne” may well be a drunkard, but he is not a very sad or lost case. Secondly, the “incorrigible mangeur d’opium” is also in a less deplorable condition than the “irreclaimable” opium eater, since irreclaimable means “that cannot be reclaimed, reformed, or called back to right ways” (*OED* 5: 486), and thus has, as already indicated, a moralising content, whereas “incorrigible” means “Qu’on ne parvient pas à amender; qui ne peut pas se corriger” (*Trésor* 10: 52), without necessarily carrying the same moral content. What this example aims to show is that Baudelaire’s narrator clearly shows a more tolerant and sympathetic attitude towards opium addicts and alcoholics than Poe’s narrator does, and that this is entirely consistent with Baudelaire’s own attitude. Baudelaire projected his own interest in these substances onto the image he constructed of Poe, and this example confirms Richard’s suspicion that Baudelaire was the creator of the opium myth which the French attached to Poe. The translation here carries the trace of the translator’s project of identifying personally with the original author, by reinforcing elements in the text which he believed to be evidence of his convictions.

7.7.4.4. Traces of Baudelaire’s Literary Horizon

Part of the arguments put forward in this conclusion so far, also concern Baudelaire’s literary environment, and the impact of the literary horizon on the translations has thus already been introduced. It has been previously argued that it was Baudelaire’s admiration for *bousingot* literature which motivated him to write

a more “gothic” version of “The Fall of the House of Usher.” Baudelaire thus wrote a translation which did not remain in the original category or genre, and an “arabesque” thus found itself changed into a gothic narrative. The title which he chose for the collections of translations is also evidence that Baudelaire wanted Poe to belong, at least in France, to the group of authors known as the *bousingots* or the “jeunes-France.” The name of the collection in which “La chute de la Maison Usher” appeared, the *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires*, may actually come straight out of Gautier’s *Onuphrius*, which ends as follows: “N’est-ce pas, lecteur, que cette fin est bien commune pour une histoire extraordinaire?” (Gautier 1995 [1833]: 71). Baudelaire’s text thus constitutes a translation which managed, in spite of its obvious literalism, to adapt the original to a different literary genre which existed in the target literature.

Chapter Eight: A Para-Textual Critique and Comparison of Baudelaire's and Pichot's "Le scarabée d'or"

8.1. Introduction

In this chapter, a second analysis of a Baudelaire translation will be presented on the same principles as those followed in Chapter Seven. This time, however, though the main focus of this chapter is still on Baudelaire's translation, this translation will also be compared with another contemporary one, which formed part of Baudelaire's translational horizon, namely Amédée Pichot's translation of "The Gold Bug," which appeared about four years *before* Baudelaire's. A theory of the translating subject will therefore also be established for Pichot, that is to say that this chapter will begin with a section which determines Pichot's position, project, stance, literary and translational horizon, from which a similar, though much briefer and less detailed description of Pichot as a translator will emerge.

During the comparative analysis, each translator's strategies will be assessed and, wherever possible, explained in the light of their position as translating subjects. The present chapter thus constitutes a second and more elaborate application of Berman's proposals for Translation Criticism, and will again be carried out in two stages: firstly, a "pre-reading" will be simulated, this time of the two target texts, and subsequently of the source text. As in the previous chapter, the "pre-readings" will yield guiding questions which will be asked of both translations during the stage of the more detailed analysis, which they will also direct. Again, the final aim is not so much to pronounce a value judgment on the translations in terms of "better" or "worse," but to compare both target texts to the original in order to make out any fundamental differences between the three, in order to place and assess Baudelaire's translation in its translational context, and to further search the translations for traces of his position, stance etc. Within this triangle, Pichot's translation is not a neutral *tertium comparationis*, but features as an independent

text with independent aims, produced by a translator who had a different position, project, stance and even literary horizon.

Frequent reference will once more be made to the para-text that has surrounded these three versions of “The Gold Bug.” More specifically, one unit of para-text which provides invaluable information on how a French reader experiences Baudelaire’s “Le scarabée d’or,” is an essay by Jean Ricardou, a well-known French literary critic. Ricardou based his analysis of “The Gold Bug” almost exclusively on the text of Baudelaire’s translation of the story, and the essay is not only perspicacious, but also highlights, albeit unwittingly, the differences between Baudelaire’s version and the original. Furthermore, Baudelaire’s “Le scarabée d’or” contains an important auctorial footnote, which reveals certain aspects of the translator’s project. The publication of “Le scarabée d’or” in the *Histoires extraordinaires* also meant that it came prefaced by Baudelaire’s essay “Edgar Allan Poe, sa vie et ses œuvres,” discussed in Chapter Five alongside its twin and predecessor, “Edgar Allan Poe: sa vie et ses ouvrages.” Lastly there is the para-text accompanying Pichot’s “Le scarabée d’or,” which came with a two-page preface. All these para-texts and a number of reviews will feature in the present chapter and will help to determine and explain the translators’ approach.

8.2. A Few Words on the Source and Target Texts

8.2.1. Texts

“The Gold Bug” was the first story by Edgar Allan Poe to be published in a translation in the French press. Its first appearance in France came in the translation by Amédée Pichot, appearing in the *Revue britannique* in November 1845 (Richard 1989: 1583), and was signed Alphonse Borghers (Amédée Pichot’s pseudonym). The version of Pichot’s translation consulted here featured in a small collection of two translations entitled *Nouvelles choisies d’Edgard Poë* (sic) which was published by the *Bibliothèque des Chemins de Fer* in 1853. “The Gold

Bug” made another pre-Baudelairean appearance in the French press in a translation by William L. Hughes (who was introduced in Chapter Six), in the *Journal des faits* of 28 October 1852 (Richard 1989: 1584). Baudelaire’s translation of “The Gold Bug,” unlike many of his other translations of Poe stories, was never published in the magazine press (possibly because of the presence in those magazines of the previously mentioned rivalling translations), and was published for the first time in the *Histoires extraordinaires* in 1856 (Richard 1989: 1584-1586). This collection was prefaced by the essay “Edgar Allan Poe, sa vie et ses œuvres” (Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1030-1048).

As far as the source texts used by the translators are concerned, Lemonnier is correct in stating that by 1856, Baudelaire must have had two sources at his disposal (see Lemonnier 1928: 167). By that time Baudelaire had access both to a version of the original story which appeared in the collection of the *Tales*, published by Wiley and Putnam in 1845, and to a later version which featured in Griswold’s posthumous edition, *The Works of the Late Edgar Allan Poe*, published in 1850 and most often referred to as the “Redfield” edition. As for the version which Pichot consulted, though the chronology of the publications suggests that Pichot could have worked with the 1845 *Tales* version, since this was, as Lemonnier indicates, available in France, certain omissions indicate that the final version of Pichot’s translation was based on the Redfield edition (Lemonnier 1928: 167).⁵⁵ The *Tales* version of “The Gold Bug” contains two paragraphs which the Redfield edition omits, and as these are missing both from Baudelaire’s and Pichot’s translation, it is safe to state that the main source for both translations was the Redfield edition of Poe’s work. The two paragraphs in question do appear in T.O. Mabbott’s 1978 edition, which presents yet another text than Redfield’s and that of the *Tales*, though, except for these two additional

⁵⁵ Two letters from Baudelaire’s correspondence in the early eighteen-fifties reveal that he tried to get in touch with Pichot to obtain the 1850 Redfield edition of Poe’s work. mainly because he wished to procure for himself Griswold’s biographical notice that featured there. The two letters prove Baudelaire’s attempts at obtaining a copy from Pichot, then editor of the *Revue britannique* – apparently to no avail. (see Correspondances I 1973 [1851]: 179-180 and Correspondances I 1973 [1852]: 204).

paragraphs, it corresponds largely to the 1845 *Tales* version. In any case, neither these missing paragraphs, nor the differences between the three original versions have any impact on the issues discussed in this chapter.

Mabbott shows that “The Gold Bug” was one of the first stories which earned Poe a small amount of money when it was selected in a competition held by the *Dollar Newspaper*: “Poe submitted “The Gold Bug,” which won the first prize of a hundred dollars” (Mabbott 1978: 804). Though Poe no longer had the copyright for the story, it remained one of his most popular ones, as the author himself indicated: “Of the “Gold Bug” (my most successful tale) more than 300,000 copies have been circulated” (quoted in Mabbott 1978: 799). The story also reveals Poe’s keen interest in cryptography, which he further developed in the essay “A Few Words on Secret Writing” (Poe 1984 [1841]: 1277-1291).

8.2.2. Para-Texts

Pichot’s preface to the 1853 edition of his *Nouvelles choisies* is interesting because in contrast with Forgues’ early essay, this piece of para-text appeared about a year *after* Baudelaire’s first biographical essay came out in the French press, and echoes the previously described distorted image of Poe which the French inherited, through Baudelaire’s essay, from Thompson, Daniel and Griswold (see Chapter Five). Like most other French readers Pichot simply adopted Baudelaire’s description of Poe’s “vices,” and the biographical data in his preface to the *Nouvelles choisies* do not venture beyond these supposed traits. A comparison with the much more neutral tone and the literary and critical focus of Forgues’ essay confirms that, once Baudelaire’s image of Poe was launched, the French interest in Poe focused on the more sensational sides of his character, as the following sentence shows:

Edgar Poë [sic] avait vendu son âme à l’alcool, comme il l’eût vendue au diable s’il avait cru au diable, ce qui est douteux, malgré quelques-unes de ses diaboliques élucubrations. (Pichot 1853: iv)

Still, in spite of this Baudelairean imprint, significant differences between Pichot's preface and Baudelaire's essays can be noted. Firstly, Pichot is clearly more knowledgeable about and concerned with placing Poe in his American literary context than Baudelaire was, when he compares him with – and puts him above – Charles Brockden Brown:

Avant Edgar Poë, les Etats-Unis avaient eu un auteur de cette école, plus allemande qu'anglaise, Ch. B. Brown; mais Edgar Poë a surpassé son maître, qui n'a sur lui que le mérite d'avoir écrit des romans plus étendus. (Pichot 1853: i)

Pichot also demonstrates his awareness that in America, Poe was not as underrated as Baudelaire had made him appear – and Pichot, with his broad access to the Anglophone press as director of the *Revue britannique*, was certainly in a position to affirm this:

Ses débuts dans la presse lui valurent des sympathies très-prononcées, et successivement divers protecteurs. (Pichot 1853: ii)

In explaining why certain parts of the American literary establishment closed their doors on Poe, Pichot also states things differently:

Elle [la société] lut, elle admira ses fantaisies littéraires; mais la porte des maisons honorables fut fermée au poète quand on sut qu'il ne respectait pas lui-même son propre génie. Nous ne pouvons blâmer la société américaine de cette sévérité; et *les originaux de cette force sont plus intéressants dans les romans que dans le monde.* (Pichot 1853: ii – italics mine)

Interestingly, Pichot could here be taken to snipe both at Baudelaire's admiration (and incarnation) of Poe's so-called vices, and at Baudelaire's criticism of American society, topics which were discussed in Chapter Five. In any case, what emerges from the above extracts is that Pichot did not picture Poe in the isolated and dissociated position that Baudelaire had allotted to him, and of which the following famous statement from Baudelaire is a reminder:

Il faut, c'est à dire, je désire, qu'Edgar Poe, qui n'est pas grand-chose en Amérique, devienne un grand homme pour la France.
(Correspondances II 1973 [1856]: 343)

So, whereas Baudelaire's para-text continuously separated Poe from his origins, by stating the lack of recognition he was receiving there, Pichot described Poe as a participant in the literary system, whose bad habits may have excluded him socially, but who was nonetheless a member of the literary establishment. If Pichot had a project for the translations of Poe's fiction, then, it does not appear to involve controlling Poe's literary destiny.

Another noticeable difference is the quality of Pichot's description of Poe's stories, which is rather more knowledgeable and interesting than Baudelaire's. The fact that Pichot selected as second story for his small volume "The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall," a story which, as "The Gold Bug," has a scientific interest, combined with Pichot's brief comments given below, show that Pichot had understood that Poe was not merely "l'écrivain des nerfs" (Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1045) whom Baudelaire was promoting:

Le scarabée d'or et l'Aéronaute d'Egdar Poë sont deux histoires dans lesquelles les calculs mathématiques et les probabilités de la science deviennent d'une manière originale les principaux éléments de la fiction. C'est peut-être la première fois que les mathématiques et la physique inspirent un intérêt si romanesque. (Pichot 1853: v)

Baudelaire never went as far as admitting that Poe was a precursor in his skilful treatment of *scientific* topoï in literature, and mainly enthused over the spiritual and psychological themes in Poe's fiction. In the preface that accompanied the *Histoires extraordinaires*, i.e. "Edgar ²Poe, sa vie et ses œuvres," Baudelaire makes the following claim:

... Poe avait déjà, à Charlottesville, manifesté une aptitude des plus remarquables pour les sciences physiques et mathématiques. Plus tard, il en fera un usage fréquent dans ses étranges contes, et en tirera des moyens très inattendus. *Mais j'ai des raisons de croire que ce n'est pas à cet ordre*

de compositions qu'il attachait le plus d'importance, et que – peut-être même à cause de cette précoce aptitude – il n'était pas loin de les considérer comme de *faciles* jongleries, comparativement aux ouvrages de pure imagination.

(Le Dantec 1951 [1856]: 1034 – my italics in the first part)

Besides being a clear projection of Baudelaire's own interests, this statement also shows that Baudelaire did not realise that for Poe, the capacity for logic and analysis is in the first place enhanced by the “pure imagination,” and that the tales of ratiocination were thus for Poe also expressions of the imaginative faculty. Though in his previous essay on Poe, Baudelaire had defined “The Gold Bug” as an example of Poe's “conjecturisme” and “probabilisme,” he had limited the rest of his comments on the story to two extensive paragraphs containing a profoundly uninteresting and unreflective series of observations, which is partly reproduced here:

Le Scarabée d'or analyse des moyens successifs à employer pour deviner un cryptogramme, avec lequel on peut découvrir un trésor enfoui. Je ne puis m'empêcher de penser avec douleur que l'infortuné E. Poe a dû plus d'une fois rêver aux moyens de découvrir des trésors. Que l'explication de cette méthode, qui fait la curieuse et littéraire spécialité de certains secrétaires de police, est logique et lucide! Que la description du trésor est belle, et comme on en reçoit une bonne sensation de chaleur et d'éblouissement! Car on le trouve, le trésor! *ce n'était point un rêve*, comme il arrive généralement dans tous ces romans, où l'auteur vous réveille brutalement après avoir excité votre esprit par des espérances apéritives; cette fois, c'est un trésor vrai, et le déchiffreur l'a bien gagné. En voici le compte exact ... (Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1020)

... and Baudelaire repeats the lengthy description of the contents of the treasure as it appears in his translation (and in Poe's text), with which he closes off his commentary on “The Gold Bug.” Nothing is said about the real focus of the story, which, as will shortly be shown, involves much more than three characters finding a beautiful treasure that would have made Poe's own mouth water. Baudelaire makes no further comments on the analytical quality of the story, does not show how the story relates intertextually to any other source literature, and ignores the other ingredients of its contents, and the commentary is therefore roundly simplistic. These introductory notes thus eloquently illustrate that Baudelaire's

project was steered by his interest in the sensational and dramatic side of Poe's writings and persona, and that their analytical themes and their focus on "ratiocination" were not his favourite topics. The analysis of the translation will have to bear out whether the latter carries the traces of this preference.

Finally, a different kind of para-text to be briefly discussed here is the contents table of the *Histoires extraordinaires*, in which Baudelaire had grouped certain stories together which do not appear as such in any of Poe's editions. Indeed, the *Histoires extraordinaires* begins with Baudelaire's translation of three tales of ratiocination: "Double assassinat dans la Rue Morgue," "La lettre volée," and "Le scarabée d'or," and continues with a medley of mainly fantastic stories with psychological, pseudo-scientific or metaphysical interests. This para-textual change, which is not due to an absence of source material, since the *Tales* were available in Europe from 1846 onwards, was only undone for the first time in the late 1980s, with Claude Richard's edition of Poe's complete work in French, which ranks the short stories in chronological order (Richard 1989).

8.3. Amédée Pichot, Poe's First Professional Translator

It is now time to attempt to establish what Pichot's position and stance as a translator may have been and whether there are any elements pointing to a specific project for the translations he realised of Poe's fiction. Pichot was an extremely prolific translator, and it would therefore have been possible to retrace characteristic aspects of his translation practice in the texts of the other translations that he made during his lifetime. The scope of this study and its focus on Baudelaire, however, do not allow for such an in-depth examination, and the discussion has therefore been limited to second-hand impressions of Pichot's work, seen by Sylvère Monod, a translator writing in 1993, and by Pichot's biographer A.L. Bisson, who in 1940 published *Amédée Pichot, A Romantic Prometheus*. The set-up of the following sections retains the main questions asked

in Chapters Four, Five and even Six, though it does not follow the order adopted there.

8.3.1. Who Was Amédée Pichot?

The fact that Amédée Pichot wrote translations under the pseudonym Alphonse Borghers is now fully recognised, and was first proven by the Poe specialist W.T. Bandy in his article “Poe’s Secret Translator: Amédée Pichot” (Bandy 1964: 277-280). The details of that discovery will not be repeated here, but the reader should know that Bisson, Lemonnier and even Patrick Quinn were unaware that Borghers and Pichot were the same person, which explains their ignorance of Pichot’s work on Poe.

Amédée Pichot, whose role as literary ambassador is described by Bisson as “parallel to that of Mme de Staël” (Bisson 1940: xii), was born in Arles in 1795 and died in Paris in 1877. As Bisson states, Pichot was a Provençal and retained throughout his life some of the more rustic characteristics of his native region. As a young man, however, he became interested in the English Romantics, more specifically in the work of Byron, and began to translate Byron into French. In 1818, he moved to Paris to integrate into the world of literature and the press, and Bisson sketches the beginnings of his career as a translator as follows:

When he arrived in Paris in 1818 he brought with him some fragmentary versions of Byron made at Montpellier, and these became the basis of the translation which Ladvocat began to publish in 1819. It was a natural sequel when, in 1820, he also translated the *Lulla Rookh* of Byron’s friend Moore. ... Within a year or so of coming to Paris he was at work on the translation of Scott’s *Poems* of which an edition came from Ladvocat in 1820-21, and from Gosselin in 1822, and which formed part of the collected edition of Scott’s work which appeared from 1820 to 1832. (Bisson 1940: 132)

Pichot became a fervent admirer of Sir Walter Scott, and according to Bisson, the Defauconpret translations of Scott’s work, which followed Pichot’s, and which

are still the ones published by Laffont today, would have benefited largely from the input of the “traducteur de Lord Byron” (Bisson 1940: 133). Pichot was thus not only prolific in the amount he translated, but he was also translating many of the major works of English literature that were being read in France at the time.

Bisson’s bibliography lacks a great amount of detail, especially regarding Pichot’s work as a translator, but what is certain is that Pichot was a well-known and widely respected specialist both of English culture and literature, and of translation from English, so much so that Bisson, describing Pichot’s death, writes:

So ended sixty years of indefatigable translation. From Byron and Scott and *Tom Jones* to Dickens, Bret Harte and the Heir of Redclyffe, there’s hardly an English writer or book of note whom he did not make accessible or more accessible to his countrymen. (Bisson 1940: 170-171)

8.3.2. Pichot’s Position in the Target Literature

Pichot was also personally acquainted with a number of the authors he translated. The first among these was Sir Walter Scott, whom he went to visit in Edinburgh in 1822, and who remained Pichot’s example and idol, both with regards to literary style and to the topoï of his works. Bisson’s description of Pichot’s trip to Scotland also illustrates how familiar the translator became with the source culture:

To Pichot, as to so many others in that generation, the journey to Scotland was a literary pilgrimage, and among all those who annually thronged to Abbotsford there can have been few who came with a more receptive and sympathetic understanding. (Bisson 1940: 133)

It seems useful, at this point, to contrast this interest on Pichot’s part with Baudelaire’s comment on Sir Walter Scott, which already featured in Chapter

Five and shows Baudelaire's preference for a more degenerate type of author and literature:

Je le dis sans honte, parce que je sens que cela part d'un profond sentiment de pitié et de tendresse, Edgar Poe, ivrogne, pauvre, persécuté, paria, me plaît plus que calme, et *vertueux*, un Goethe ou un W. Scott.
(Le Dantec 1951 [1852]: 1029)

These comments again underline the differences in literary preferences (and literary horizon) that existed between Baudelaire and Pichot, who clearly belonged to a different generation of (re)writers.

Later on, in 1843, and in a similarly friendly manner, Pichot, who made numerous trips to England throughout his life, also met Dickens, and "the liking between him and the new-risen star was mutual and immediate" (Bisson 1940: 169). What is more, during this trip Pichot played guide to another translator, who is now known to the reader as one of Baudelaire's rival Poe-translators (see Chapter Six):

On one of these English holidays he acted as guide to a friend seeing England for the first time ... This was "Old Nick," the translator and critic E.D. Forgues, who in the 'forties came to hold much the same position as an authority on English literature as Pichot had held in the 'twenties and early 'thirties. (Bisson 1940: 168)

Referring to the pre-analytical questions asked in Chapter Four, Pichot's "being-in-language" (what Berman calls his "position langagière"), and his position as a writer and rewriter ("position scripturaire"), can thus be sketched. First of all, it would appear that the translator's command of the source language when he was translating Poe, must have been one of highly developed competence: as was just shown, Pichot had begun his career as a translator in the early eighteen twenties, and he translated Poe in the late forties and early fifties. He was by then an experienced visitor of Scotland and England, and had also become the chief editor of the magazine that specialised in English and Anglophone literature (the *Revue britannique*) – activities which simply could not have been taken up by someone with less-than-excellent English skills. Pichot's command of English must have

changed over the course of his career as a translator, but his high level of competence was probably fully acquired by the time he translated Poe. Though contemporary definitions of bilingualism would now deprive him from that label, in his own days Pichot would certainly have been considered a bilingual in English and French.

The question whether the translator translated other same source language texts has just been answered: Pichot's career as a (very prolific) translator from English spanned sixty years. Still, if one wish to consider nineteenth-century American English as different from its British counterpart, it can be added that his knowledge of American English and American culture would have been less great than his familiarity with everything English and Scottish. Even so, considering that Pichot also translated works like Longfellow's *Slave's Dream* (Bisson 1940: 358), he would have been more familiar with the culture and the language of the New Continent than Baudelaire, whose anti-Americanism must have cut short any further interest in that continent and its culture.

Besides translations from English, Pichot also worked and wrote in other literary fields, and his writings, work and literary acquaintances (both in French and in English literature) allow one to determine to some degree what his status and position in the literary system may have been. The most important element here is the fact that Pichot was, for a very long time, the director of the *Revue britannique*, and the significance of that position is confirmed by Monod:

Plus qu'aucun des ouvrages [i.e. original writings] rédigés par Amédée Pichot, et dont la plupart, il faut bien l'avouer, sont presque oubliés aujourd'hui sans que l'on ait envie de crier à l'injustice, bien plus que les nombreuses traductions publiées sous sa signature, l'animation de la *Revue britannique* lui assure une place dans l'histoire littéraire. ... Il la dirigea de façon très personnelle et autoritaire, de 1839 à sa mort en 1877. (Monod 1993: 79)

Pichot's work for the *Revue britannique* consisted mainly of revising and writing translations, and Pichot's work as a translator thus made the basis of his status as magazine editor. The reference which Monod makes to the mediocre quality of

Pichot's own writings is confirmed by Bisson, who, in spite of her obvious devotion to the personage, indicates in several places that in his own prose, Pichot lacked literary genius (see Bisson 1940: xiv). It was, then, not his work as a writer but as a rewriter, which earned Pichot a certain status in French literature. As was shown in Chapter Four, this was also the case for Baudelaire, albeit only in the beginning of his career as a translator, which was soon caught up by his career as a poet.

8.3.3. Elements of Pichot's Translation Project and Stance

A generic impression of the quality of Pichot's other translations, combined with a depiction of Pichot's literary tastes and preferences, may go some way in explaining this or that strategy in his translation of Poe, and in forming a picture of his stance as a translator.

With reference to Pichot's translation of Milton's poetry, for instance, Monod speaks of a "tendance à la dilution" and a "petit nombre d'omissions, d'inexactitudes et d'erreurs" (Monod 1993: 88). Another translation by Pichot, this time from Macaulay, shows even more pruning on Pichot's part, as Monod writes: "Ce qui frappe le plus au premier abord, c'est la condensation du texte, dont les exemples sont innombrables" (Monod 1993: 88), an observation which is completed by Monod's statement that:

Beaucoup de passages sont remaniés par Pichot de fond en comble. Et surtout les omissions sont très nombreuses, parfois massives et souvent dommageables. (Monod 1993: 89)

Monod also discusses in some detail Pichot's translation of *David Copperfield*, which Pichot translated under the title *Le neveu de ma tante*. What is interesting is Pichot's preface to this translation, in which he discusses, among other things, his translation strategies, and which Monod paraphrases as follows:

Amédée Pichot explique ensuite comment la France doit traiter les écrivains étrangers: il convient certes de les accueillir chez nous, mais sans sacrifier pour autant les droits de notre bon goût traditionnel.
(Monod 1993: 91)

Pichot, then, seems to have adhered to a largely domesticating stance, which aspires to adapt the text to the customs and the tastes of the national culture – a stance which would logically result in a fluency strategy (or, in House's terms, a "covert" translation). Indeed, as far as Dickens was concerned, Pichot found that there was too much caricature there, and described his approach as follows:

[Pour traduire *David Copperfield*], non seulement j'ai sacrifié davantage les anglicismes au désir de satisfaire le goût français; mais encore j'ai modifié un ou deux caractères et abrégé quelques scènes.
(Pichot quoted in Monod 1993: 91)

Again, then, one finds confirmation of a stance on Pichot's part which allowed for strong fluency strategies, and a project that strove to adapt Dickens to what Pichot perceived to be the French taste reigning at the time. The use of the word "project" here is important, because the above comments on Pichot's Dickens translations need to be hedged with some reservations. Dickens was the author with whom, though they were friends, Pichot felt a serious difference in literary taste and stylistic preference, and whose verbal prolixity and baroque style he criticized from the beginning. Still, as Bisson also points out, Pichot liked Dickens personally, and appreciated the topoï of Dickens' work. The reason why Monod concentrates on Pichot's translation of *David Copperfield*, is that Monod himself has retranslated *David Copperfield*, but this focus may actually give in a lopsided impression of Pichot's talents, and, more importantly, of his overall stance as a translator.

Bisson's analyses, for instance, make it clear that, had Monod turned his attention to Pichot's translations of Sir Walter Scott, or even to translations from other authors, he would have found considerably fewer instances of pruning than he found in Pichot's translations of Dickens. This impression is also confirmed by

Bisson's comments on another Pichot translation of Dickens, this time of *Barnaby Rudge*:

If the opening chapters of his *Barnaby Rudge* be compared with the original, it will be seen just what Pichot thought ought to go, and how much has gone – a phrase here and there, two or three descriptive sentences at a stretch, a conversation shortened and its idiosyncrasies, meaningless to French readers, quietly removed. *This is very different from the treatment he had given to Scott or Byron.* “Une traduction littérale était possible,” he wrote with evident relief of some of the *Christmas Tales*; “nous l’avons entreprise sans renoncer pour cela, selon notre usage, à faire écrire à Charles Dickens en français littéraire.”
(Bisson 1940: 386-387 – italics mine)

The statement underscores that a translator's stance is not the same as his specific project for this or that translation: though his project of translating Dickens prompted him to do major cuttings there, Pichot's overall stance as a translator did not necessarily include this strategy as a fixed value. A recurrent observation, which points to a certain stance, however, seems to be that Pichot wrote fluent translations, and strove to write the kind of French that was considered adequate for literary purposes.

8.3.4. A Glimpse of Pichot's Literary and Translational Horizon

What also becomes clear when reading these descriptions of Pichot's translations is that he worked during the period, described in Chapter Six, when the translation norms, which had for so long imposed severe constraints on translation, were being relaxed more and more. Though Pichot's work on Poe coincided with Baudelaire's, his career as a translator spans a very long period and began when the classical norms that applied to the translation of “high” literature (i.e. poetry and classical prose) were still strongly felt throughout the field. Nonetheless, his Poe translations appeared late in his career, and the lack of norms governing the genre of “modern” prose writing implied that, for his translations of Poe, he would have been as free as Baudelaire in his choice of strategy.

Pichot's skills as a translator were recognised by some famous contemporaries of his, both literary figures and translators, during his day. Pichot, who was not a member of any of the Parisian "Cénacles" (Bisson 1940: 376), was on intimate terms with Nodier, Chateaubriand, (Bisson 1940: 374), and Lamartine (Bisson 1940: 375). As already indicated, Bisson also claims that good parts of the Defauconpret translations of Scott's œuvre can be attributed to Pichot. Here are some of her comments on the Pichot-Defauconpret relationship:

As the correspondence between them shows, even Defauconpret referred to him for advice about a rendering or a reference. The nature and importance of Pichot's share [in the Scott translations which do not bear his name] is borne out by other evidence; his word-perfect knowledge of Scott's work, his concern with the exact meaning of words and references and their rendering in the "Defauconpret" translation in other books than those he is known to have translated, the fact that he certainly revised *Old Mortality*, almost certainly *Ivanhoe* and others, and wrote a "commentaire" for *Waverley*. The *Œuvres Complètes* may bear the name of Defauconpret, but for their final form the responsibility was rather with Pichot. (Bisson 1940: 341)

Still, recent Pléiade and Laffont editions of Scott's work in French do not mention Pichot as a translator at all, and these claims can therefore not be taken for granted without further investigation. Bisson's book does contain an appendix with extracts of the correspondence between Pichot and Defauconpret, which confirm that Defauconpret clearly considered Pichot to be an authority on the English language, on English and Scottish culture and on Sir Walter Scott (see Bisson 1940: 400-403). It also shows Pichot as a man who was not only practising translation, but also discussing it both with the authors involved, and with other translators. His friendship with Forgues, and his work at the *Revue britannique* as translator and editor of other people's translations, also show a person whose translational horizon may have been the same as Baudelaire's, but whose position as well-known translator may have had the effect of making him more subject to the norms then governing translation. In other words, the fact that Pichot was an experienced translator may have instilled in him a more conservative attitude, and could explain his adherence to fluency.

As far as his literary horizon goes, Bisson shows that Pichot's personal literary tastes were entirely consistent with his liking of Sir Walter Scott and the English Romantics, and his comments on the work of Hugo, for instance, show that his tastes were very much that of the (English) Romantic age. Pichot was thus a part of the generation just preceding Baudelaire's, who had not yet developed the interests which that new generation held in socio-political matters and in the more morbid, debauched and "frenetic" sides of the late Romantic period. From an extract in which she cites Pichot's reactions to Hugo's *Légende*, Bisson makes it clear that themes like "le génie du mal ... la haine ... l'impiété ... le socialisme le plus révolutionnaire" (Pichot quoted in Bisson 1940: 380), were not to Pichot's liking, and that he would therefore not have been moved by the dark side of Poe the way Baudelaire was. Neither would the Baudelairean characters of dandy, *poète maudit* and *bousingot* have had any attraction for Pichot. The following information, derived from what was found on Pichot's bookshelves, goes some way in explaining why Pichot (unlike, for instance, William Little Hughes – see Chapter Six) never bothered with any further Poe translations after the two that were published in 1853. Bisson's surprise here also speaks volumes for the differences in literary tastes between the two translators:

As the years went on, the books that he thus received with the homage of their authors were a far cry from Nodier and Lamartine, Scott and Byron, even from Pétrus Borel's *Champavert* which its author sent him in 1833 with his "hommage, reconnaissance, dévouement." The *contes immoraux* of the "lycanthrope" [Pétrus Borel] have a queer look among his books; and, when one remembers all that Pichot liked and stood for in literature and all that the donor has come to represent, it is an even queerer shock to come across Baudelaire's translation of Poe's *Eureka*, "de la part de l'auteur." (Bisson 1940: 381)

Bisson's consternation at finding a book by Poe (and translated and dedicated by Baudelaire, at that) is not surprising since, as indicated above, she was unaware of Pichot's translation of two of Poe's stories under the pseudonym of Borghers (see Bisson 1940: 382n).

With this brief sketch of Pichot's position in French literature as an author, editor and most of all translator, the following points can be stated. Firstly, that due to his experience in translation, and his many visits to Britain, Pichot was much better equipped in English than Baudelaire could ever have been. Secondly, that Pichot was an experienced, or better said, a veteran translator, and that translation was his central activity, which may have prevented him from doing anything divergent or unprecedented in his translation practice. Thirdly, that he had great experience in translating from English, and more specifically, that he was very experienced in translating English prose. Fourthly, that in general, Pichot's stance was most likely one of striving for fluency, though not necessarily for domestication – he wanted to produce texts that were palatable for French tastes, but he also had too much respect for the authors he translated (especially Scott and Byron), and for the source culture from which he translated, to produce texts that were too far removed from the originals. Fifthly, if Pichot had a project for the translations of Poe's stories, this can not have been the personal appropriation which it became for Baudelaire. Pichot's literary preferences clearly lay with a different genre, and whereas Baudelaire had worked to separate Poe from his origins, Pichot begins by allotting him a place in American literature. Sixth, though he is from a slightly older generation, Pichot's translational horizon would have been more or less the same as Baudelaire's, mainly because of the fact that they were both translating modern and non-classical prose narratives, and that, as we saw in Chapter Six, this was a genre still ungoverned by any specific norms, both as far as originals and translations were concerned. Still, his central position as a translator may have tended Pichot's practice towards the more conservative norms of his time. Lastly, Pichot's literary preferences were very different from Baudelaire's, and Pichot would have had more interest in the analytical than in the troubled side of Poe. These conclusions should help to better assess and explain Pichot's translation strategies as they are observed throughout the rest of this chapter.

8.4. Pre-Reading the Two Translations and the Original

8.4.1. Introductory Remarks

Considering that the stage of pre-reading is also the first encounter of the reader with the plot and contents of “The Gold Bug,” it seems inevitable to give the details of the narrative that constitutes “The Gold Bug” at the present stage. Both Pichot’s and Baudelaire’s versions are close enough translations to have maintained the storyline and the main elements of Poe’s plot, which entails that the pre-reading of Pichot’s version, which here comes first because it precedes Baudelaire’s translation chronologically, will be longer and more detailed in its rendering of the plot than the other two. The reader should also keep in mind that this stage serves to build guiding hypotheses, and in no way aims to formulate anything conclusive. For the questions which Berman asks us to keep in mind during this pre-reading stage, the reader is again referred to the relevant sections in Chapter Three.

8.4.2. Pre-Reading Pichot’s Translation

The story of “The Gold Bug,” told by an I-narrator, begins with his description of Sullivan’s Island, the dwelling place of the other two protagonists, William Legrand and his servant (and ex-slave) Jupiter. The narrator describes Legrand as an intelligent though somewhat misanthropic man, with an amateur scientist’s interest in nature, particularly insects. The action begins with a visit of the narrator to Sullivan’s Island. Upon their meeting, Legrand excitedly reports his finding of a gold-coloured beetle of an unknown species. Noticeably, Legrand is much more interested in his find than the narrator, who is distracted and even misunderstands Legrand’s meaning during their first dialogue on the subject. Jupiter’s impression of the gold bug, which he calls a “carabé,” is that the beetle is not a real insect, but is made of solid gold. Legrand, having lent the beetle to a friend for the evening, draws it on a piece of paper for the narrator, but this gives

rise to some discussion on the quality of the drawing. Legrand becomes absent-minded and surly, and the narrator decides to go home.

A month later, in Charleston, the narrator is visited by Jupiter, and a difficult conversation ensues in which Jupiter gives a confused report of the mental state of his master. Jupiter hands the narrator a message from Legrand, in which the latter asks him to come over, and the narrator and Jupiter set out for Sullivan's Island. On arrival, the narrator finds Legrand in what seems like a state of mental disarray, Legrand having now also adopted Jupiter's belief that the gold bug is of great financial value. The narrator vainly tries to convince his friend that he is ill, and Legrand manages to convince him in turn to come with him for the night, in order to help him out with an undefined task, which involves the gold bug, on the continent.

The three of them set out in the afternoon and Legrand, refusing to give any further explanation about the purpose of the adventure, leads his two companions to a big tulip tree standing in the midst of a deserted stretch of land, and orders Jupiter to climb up into the tree taking the beetle with him – an order which Jupiter, who fears the gold bug, carries out only after some protest. At a particular point in his climb Jupiter finds a skull nailed into a dead branch, and Legrand tells him to lower the gold bug, attached to a piece of string, through the left eye of the skull – an order which Jupiter again carries out with some hesitation, since he cannot distinguish left from right. Legrand then designates a spot which lies in the prolongation of the two points thus obtained; i.e. the tree trunk and the point where the gold bug has fallen, and he and his two reluctant companions begin to dig. They dig for two hours, and find nothing, but then Legrand realizes that Jupiter has mistaken the left eye of the skull for the right one. They begin digging again in a different spot, and with the help of Legrand's dog, they first dig up a number of human bones and a big Spanish knife, and then find a wooden trunk, which contains a treasure of immense value. Bringing back the treasure takes up all of the night, and the three protagonists get back to the hut for the second time around sunrise, and go to sleep for a while. Then they draw up an inventory of the

treasure in the trunk, which takes them most of the next day. The treasure is described in detail, and the value of the objects is given.

The second part of the story consists of Legrand's explanation, for the narrator's (and the reader's) benefit, of his method in searching for the treasure. Legrand explains that while making his drawing of the gold bug, he noticed that the piece of paper was really a piece of vellum, a very fine type of parchment. Legrand then reminds the narrator how he happened to bring the piece of parchment close enough to the fire to heat it, which revealed a skull as part of a different drawing in secret ink – hence their discussion on the quality of the drawing. Legrand recounts how, when he heated the parchment again, another drawing revealed itself, this time of a kid goat (a noun for which Pichot gives the English word, since it will become part of a rebus), which Legrand immediately recognized as referring to a pirate's name: Captain Kidd. Legrand continues to recount how, after heating the parchment for a third time, a series of characters, constituting a coded message, a cipher, showed up. A detailed description is then given of the method of deciphering the rebus and the code, and this constitutes the second half of the narrative. The story ends with Legrand and the narrator's speculations as to the origin of the human bones they had found in the pit.

In this story the gold bug is clearly a decoy: it features in the title, and for quite a while the reader is misled into believing that this is a story about a beetle. What is interesting in Pichot's version is that Jupiter continually calls the gold bug a "carabé," a word that adds to the ambiguous nature of the gold bug, and which seems to indicate that there is a difference in the way the three protagonists estimate the importance of the gold bug in this story.

In general, Pichot's style and language are different from Baudelaire's, a remark which can be made even after this initial stage of pre-reading. Pichot's text is fluent, and there is none of the heavy syntax and anglicised word-order or vocabulary which was found in Baudelaire's translation of "The Fall of the House of Usher." The syntax is idiomatic, and so is the choice of vocabulary, which is all

standard nineteenth-century French. In the dialogues (i.e. direct reported discourse), both the narrator and Legrand use this same language, but this is notably different from Jupiter's speech, whose social dialect, as it will be called for the moment, is Pichot's translation of what Poe thought a nineteenth-century ex-slave sounded like. In Pichot's version, Jupiter's language shows a few aspects of French Creole (e.g. the pronoun *li*, used in the Martiniquan variety of French Creole for the direct and indirect object form of the singular third person pronouns "lui," "elle" and "la," is here used in subject position), but mainly consists in having Jupiter speak in infinitive verb phrases and by converting the subject and object pronouns into their accusative forms, which results in the rather stereotype constructions of the type "me eat bread."

Another remark to be made is that the story (and Pichot's translation) contains a conspicuous number of misunderstandings between the different characters which usually seem to arise from the fact that the addressee is distracted or, in Jupiter's case, simply does not understand the speaker in question, a problem which seems to stem from Jupiter's own language use. Lastly, the atmosphere and scenery throughout the story is one of playful suspense – there is none of the morbid tension and fear which existed in "The Fall of the House of Usher." The little tension there is results from the pleasant excitement at the idea of finding a treasure. The scenery is described with botanical and geographical details and the landscapes are also described with noticeable precision, which seems logical since they contain the clues of the treasure hunt. As has already been indicated, the story's structure is neatly two-fold: first comes the narrator's account of the events both preceding and during the search, and then the narrator reproduces Legrand's report on how he deciphered the code, and how he located the treasure.

8.4.3. Pre-Reading Baudelaire's Translation

In Baudelaire's version, the events in the story are the same as in Pichot's and Poe's, except for a few significant details. Firstly, in this translation, when Legrand makes the drawing of the gold bug for the narrator, he does not do this on

a dirty piece of *paper*: Baudelaire's Legrand immediately draws on a piece of "vélin" (i.e. vellum). The reader and the characters in the story are therefore immediately made aware that what Legrand has found on the beach is not merely a piece of paper. The presence of parchment is not further explained, but it raises the suspicion, much earlier than in Pichot's text, that something out of the ordinary is going on. This also takes the focus off the gold bug, which therefore functions less as a distraction in Baudelaire's text, since the reader realizes from the beginning that *besides* the gold bug, another bizarre thing (a piece of parchment) has also been found. A second strange detail in Baudelaire's translation, which one can immediately impute to a mistranslation on Baudelaire's part, considering it makes so little sense, is the way in which Legrand behaves when the three characters are walking to the place where the treasure is buried. In Baudelaire's translation, Legrand, who has attached the beetle to a piece of string, appears to be swinging the beetle *around himself*, ("autour de lui") i.e. over the top of his head, which, instead of giving him the airs of a magician, makes him look more like a madman.

In terms of style and language, this text also differs quite substantially from Pichot's. In general, the language is often wooden and unidiomatic, and there are again occurrences of the anglicised word-order noted in the previous chapter. As far as the representations of direct discourse are concerned, Baudelaire's version has all three protagonists speak exactly the same language, with Jupiter occasionally being a little more informal than the others. The reason why Baudelaire opts for such a very neutralised rendering of the dialogues in the story is explained by him in a footnote. This piece of para-text, and the consequences of Baudelaire's choice in translation, will be discussed more broadly in the course of the actual analysis.

Without going into the details of the characters' language use, there is one immediately noticeable consequence of Baudelaire's decision not to translate Jupiter's slave dialect. In Pichot, Jupiter calls the gold bug a "carabé," whereas in Baudelaire's version the gold bug is constantly being called "scarabée." This

entails that the function of the gold bug may very well differ between the two translations. Lastly, the backdrop of the story and the atmosphere that reigns in Baudelaire's text feel more sinister than in Pichot, and there is a stronger feeling of menace and danger, which Legrand's worrisome behaviour increases even more.

8.4.4. Pre-Reading Poe's Text

In Poe, the two differences noted above in Baudelaire's plot (i.e. the early appearance of the parchment and the bizarre behaviour of Legrand), are not present, and the storyline is exactly the one presented by Pichot – the piece of parchment is here, on its first appearance, also presented as a piece of paper ("foolscap," more precisely), which helps to mislead the reader on the central focus of the story, for as long as possible. The scenery and atmosphere in Poe's text also resemble more closely what we found in Pichot, and have nothing particularly menacing or sinister.

A remarkable difference which immediately distinguishes Poe's text from Baudelaire's (and even, though to a lesser degree, from Pichot's) is that all three characters speak a different kind of language. The narrator's speech shows a level of formality and overdone politeness which make him appear, on occasion, both too naïve and too narrow-minded to understand what is really going on. The narrator is an upper-class Charlestonian and speaks the language of the nineteenth-century well-to-do Southern urbanite, using, on occasion, very circumspect and formulaic phrases. Secondly, in Poe's text, there is Jupiter's strongly foregrounded slave dialect, which also serves as a signpost for the more subtle differences between the language used by Legrand and the narrator. Thirdly, Legrand employs a similar, though less baroque and formalised English than the narrator, and seems fond of scientific terminology, here and there throwing in a Latin term – which entails that the gold bug, in Poe's text, carries an additional name: *scarabæus*. In Poe's original text, the dialogues are also littered

with misunderstandings, and here these clearly arise from the differences in linguistic habits between the three protagonists.

8.4.5. Comparing First Impressions and Distilling Guiding Questions

Three main differences thus emerge from these pre-readings.

The first of these certainly has to do with the function of the gold bug in the story, and the question could be formulated as follows:

1. What role does the gold bug play in Poe's story, and how is this reproduced in Baudelaire's and Pichot's translation respectively?

The second question refers to the function of the linguistic differences that exist between the characters in Poe's story, and thus becomes:

2. What are the consequences of the translators' respective treatments of the differences in language use that exist between the three characters?

Thirdly, a brief examination will be made of the differences noticed in Baudelaire's version in atmosphere, and the third question thus becomes:

3. Are there any distinctions to be found in the scenery and the atmosphere in the three versions which could explain the more sinister impression left by Baudelaire's version?

These three questions will guide the following analysis, and will lead to a view of the type of reading which each of the three texts can yield.

8.5. Comparative Analysis

8.5.1. The Risks of a Symbolic Reading

The object of the gold bug is obviously one of the central elements in all three versions. Throughout the narrative the hypothetical link between the gold bug and the treasure is established in a number of ways, and the gold bug gradually becomes, at least in the English text, a pointer to the treasure, a metaphorical index to its presence.

In his essay “L’or du scarabée,” (Ricardou 1971: 39-58), Jean Ricardou gives his reading of the story, based on Baudelaire’s translation. Ricardou attributes to the object of the gold bug an important symbolic role, linking it with other elements in the story, and outside of it. For Ricardou “l’étude des particularités cosmographiques du récit ouvre(-t-elle) sur un symbolisme” (Ricardou 1971: 44). In order to establish the fact that the text invests the beetle with symbolic value, Ricardou draws his readers’ attention to the regular co-occurrence of the beetle and the sun, the latter appearing either in the east or in the west (at the time of sunrise or sunset). Ricardou sees a symbolic link between beetle and sun, writing that “Leur commun va-et-vient détermine entre soleil et scarabée une étroite liaison” (Ricardou 1971: 43). Indeed, the gold bug has similar features as the sun: its colour is described as “d’une brillante couleur d’or” (Le Dantec 1951: 67, lines 94-95), and its shape is that of “une boule d’or brunie” (Le Dantec 1951: 80, line 664), and these features also appertain to the treasure. This prompts Ricardou to establish a chain of three symbolically connected elements, all sharing some attributes with one another and inviting a reading which establishes them as symbolically equivalent:

Il est possible d’établir entre les trois termes une chaîne d’équivalences:
trésor = scarabée = soleil. (Ricardou 1971: 43)

However, Ricardou’s reading of the French text invests both the gold bug and the sun with rather more symbolic value than is appropriate, and this is due precisely

to the fact that he is basing his observations on Baudelaire's version. Ricardou begins by claiming that it is *sunrise* (and not sunset), and the "va-et-vient" of the narrator between west and east, which form the temporal and spatial poles around which the narrative centres its events and facts – the treasure, for instance, is hidden in the west. It could be argued, however, that there is nothing particularly surprising in the location of the treasure in the west, considering that the overall location of the narrative is on the Atlantic coast ... and that the treasure, had it been buried to the east of Sullivan's Island, would have had to be found at the bottom of the sea.

This is not to deny that in a story in which the scenery provides the clues in a treasure hunt, elements like east, west, sunrise or sunset or other geographical data have a specific significance, but connecting these elements with the gold bug and investing this connection with symbolism does not apply to Poe's text. This point is highly relevant because Ricardou, again using his symbolic chain as a point of departure, goes on to establish a further link in his chain and states that:

... par le fréquent rappel du diable, en contiguïté directe ou indirecte avec le scarabée, la prose tend à monter un système métonymique artificiel grâce auquel à la manière d'un dressage pavlovien, scarabée et diable seront automatiquement associés. (Ricardou 1971: 48)

However, several of the occurrences of "diable" which Ricardou has found in Baudelaire's text, simply do not occur in the English text (nor can they be found in Pichot's), and these are therefore additions introduced by Baudelaire, while other occurrences of "diable" (e.g. "de tous les diables" (Le Dantec 1951: 72, line 331)) occur in the form of a much less conspicuously diabolical "d-d" in the English text. It should therefore be pointed out that if Ricardou sees certain "fugaces apparitions du fantastique" in "The Gold Bug," (Ricardou 1971: 48) this is, as he also seems to recognise, due to Baudelaire's translation:

Ainsi est-ce sans doute parce qu'il fut sensible à ce dressage [pavlovien] que Baudelaire, en sa version, eût l'heureuse idée d'accroître cette grappe d'un élément nouveau, traduisant "Nonsense! no! – the bug" par "Eh non! que diable! – le scarabée" (Ricardou 1971: 48)

Ricardou thus admits that Baudelaire is here translating beyond what can be found in Poe's text, and Ricardou's licensing Baudelaire's addition, simply because it supports his own interpretation of the text, constitutes a rather topsy-turvy way of doing textual hermeneutics.

However one may judge his methods, what Ricardou's piece of para-text clearly shows is that Baudelaire's translation produces different effects than the original. Though Ricardou states that the symbolic values he discerns are created by the juxtaposition of certain elements in the text (i.e. that they are an effect of the text and do not have any pre-established symbolic value), his interpretations not only seem exaggeratedly "symbolic," but also overlook certain details that have to do with translation, and not with the narrative structure of the original. Ricardou would thus have fallen in the trap set by Poe, whose intentions in "The Gold Bug" are explained below by a contemporary of his, Thomas Dunn English:

The Bug, which gives its title to the story, is used only in the way of mystification, having throughout a seeming and no real connection with the subject. Its purpose is to seduce the reader into the idea of supernatural machinery and keeping [sic] him so mystified until the last moment.
(quoted in Mabbott 1978: 799)

Moreover, before going into the para-text which will elucidate the original function of the gold bug more profoundly, it should be pointed out that the narrative in itself features a claim that suggests quite strongly that the gold bug is a decoy. It occurs at the moment when Legrand, piqued by the narrator's belief that he has gone insane, puts on a show of strange behaviour and claims:

... and I shall arrive at the gold of which it [the beetle] is the index.
Jupiter, bring me that *scarabæus*! (Mabbott 1978: 815 line 291-293)

How, then, has Ricardou arrived at his symbolic reading of the text, and what allows him to establish his chain of equivalents?

8.5.2. The Functions of the Gold Bug

The verbal representation of the object of the beetle is conspicuously varied in the English text, which features a number of variations such as “beetle,” “insect,” “bug,” and “*scarabæus*,” but is remarkably monotonous in Baudelaire’s version. Though French has terms like “*escarbot*,” (an informal denomination for an “*Insecte du genre des coléoptères*” of which a subspecies is even called the “*escarbot doré*” (*Trésor* 8: 111); “*coccinelle*,” or “*bestiole*” (in the sense of “*petite bête*” (*Trésor* 4: 429)), Baudelaire constantly refers to the object with the noun “*scarabée*,” and uses “*insecte*” where Poe uses the same word in English. On the other hand, Pichot’s version shows a significant variation in its denotations for the gold bug, since in Jupiter’s speech the bug is called “*carabé*.” This is a brilliant find, as “*carabé*” is defined in the *Trésor* as an “*Ambre jaune utilisé autrefois en médecine*” (*Trésor* 5: 168), which reminds one of the gold-coloured aspect of the beetle, while at the same closely resembling (taking away the accent) the French word “*carabe*,” a relatively common sort of beetle, defined in the *Trésor* as “*insecte coléoptère carnivore*” which also includes the species “*carabe doré, rutilant, violet*” (*Trésor* 5: 168). The object of the gold bug, at least in Pichot’s version, thus carries an additional name that is loaded with associative meaning, and this brings Pichot’s version much closer to Poe’s than Baudelaire’s.

A precise comparison of the occurrences of the object in the three texts can confirm this point further. Of the eighty-four times that the beetle is referred to in English, it is mainly designated by the noun “bug,” (thirty-eight times), then, almost equally as often as “beetle” and “*scarabæus*” (twenty-one and eighteen times respectively) and lastly, seven times out of eighty-four, by “insect.” Baudelaire’s text has eighty-three occurrences, and refers to the object with the noun “*scarabée*” sixty-six times, with “insect” sixteen times, and once uses the noun “*bête*.” Pichot, who due to two repetitions has eighty-six occurrences of nouns referring to the object, uses the word “*scarabée*” forty-one times, while Jupiter’s word “*carabé*” occurs twenty five times, and “*insecte*” nineteen times. There is also one occurrence of “(petite) *bête*.” In the English text, then, the object is most often referred to by “bug,” but its number of occurrences (thirty-

eight) does not seem overwhelming enough to call the presence of the noun “bug” pervasive, whereas this is clearly the case for Baudelaire’s “scarabée.” Pichot, on the other hand, can not be accused of this monotony, since less than half of the occurrences of the object are represented by “scarabée.”

The reading of the texts where “bug” or “scarabée” are alternated by an at least equally large amount of other nouns, as is the case in Poe’s and Pichot’s texts, will most likely give a different interpretation to what Ricardou supposes to be the symbolic content of the object, and it is therefore necessary to consider a reading of the English text in order to contrast it with Ricardou’s reading of Baudelaire’s translation. As T. D. English indicated, the gold bug could be a decoy, and its possible meaninglessness is illustrated by a pun in the discourse of Jupiter, who is actually insisting on the contrary:

“... it is of a brilliant colour – about the size of a large hickory-nut – with two black spots near one extreme of the back, and another, somewhat longer, at the other. The antennae are – ...”

“Dey aint no tin in him, Massa Will, I keep a telling on you,” here interrupted Jupiter.

“De bug is a goole bug, solid, ebery bit of him.”

(Mabbott 1978: 808-809, lines 76-82)

Jupiter has mistaken Legrand’s “antennae” for something referring to *tin*. But the wordplay “no tin” could also be intended as a subtle assertion that there is *nothing* in the bug, that it has no meaning or value. Daniel Kempton points out that the spelling of “no tin” is almost the same as Jupiter’s version of the word “nothing,” namely “notin” (Mabbott 1978: 811, line 173), which, according to Kempton:

... suggests the alternative (contradictory) assertion that there is *nothing* in the bug, that the bug is a cipher (naught) or perhaps a ghost.

(Kempton 1987: 11)

The “ghostliness” of the bug is further established in the English text by means of the adjective by which Jupiter often accompanies it: “a goole bug” (Mabbott 1978: 809, line 81), “dat goole bug” (Mabbott 1978: 812, line 207), “de goole bug” (Mabbott 1978: 813, line 220), etc. As Kempton also suggests, the sound of

Jupiter's speech, and the fact that the narrator initially mistakes Legrand's sketch of the bug for a death's head, invites an interpretation of the adjective "goole" as "ghoul," which derives from the Arabic *gūl* and is defined in *OED* as "an evil spirit supposed, in Mohammedan countries, to rob graves and prey on human corpses" (*OED* 4: 150). The word "ghoul" also immediately reminds the reader of the two skeletons which the treasure-hunters will also find in the pit.

What Baudelaire (and Ricardou) did not notice, then, is that the English text features the gold bug as a ghostly or elusive presence, possibly meaningless, and definitely a distraction. This interpretation contradicts Ricardou's attribution of symbolism and his metonymic chain of sun-treasure-beetle, and allows one to agree with T.D. English who invested the bug with a certain non-presence, its function being that of a "mystification." There is also more than the changing terminology in Poe's text to support this claim, and numerous indications that the beetle is a "red herring" (May 1991: 85) pervade all three versions of the text, since they are part of the plot. Its first appearance in the story, for instance, is surrounded by a series of elements that point to its elusiveness. Firstly, the beetle is not actually present "on stage" the first time it is discussed, Legrand having lent it to a friend for the night, an invisibility which constitutes the first indication of its elusiveness. Secondly, the bug is of an unknown species, again making its identity ungraspable. Thirdly, a few lines further on in the conversation, due to the misunderstanding that occurs between Legrand and the narrator, the beetle is switched for something else (*in casu*, sunrise), and a discussion ensues between Legrand and Jupiter, as to whether it is a real beetle or one made of gold. The examples, all occurring at the beginning of the story, show that the gold bug immediately becomes an object whose meaning is purposely changeable, and Williams is therefore correct in warning against "the risk inherent in symbolic reading" (Williams 1982: 658). This risk, however, is inherent to a reading of Baudelaire's translation.

8.5.3. The Gold Bug as a Symbol for Changing Referentiality

Williams, who thus implicitly refutes Ricardou's symbolism, claims that the gold bug is an indicator, not so much of the treasure, but of the fact that the relationship between a word and its "object" or referent is not as straightforward as it seems, and can differ from speaker to speaker. Williams has the following to say about the central focus of "The Gold Bug":

The narrative's shifting terminology for its central image, the gold-bug, emphatically illustrates the arbitrariness of the relationship between word and referent ... The synonyms circumscribe a still-unnamed centre; the connection of names to the referent is obviously arbitrary and unstable. (Williams 1982: 152)

This leads to the broader observation that in "The Gold Bug," it is the characters' language use which reveals this problem with reference, in the sense that their very different attitudes towards referentiality result from their different attitudes to language in general.

This is further confirmed by Williams, who sees "semantic indeterminacy" as the central theme of this story (Williams 1982: 659), an indeterminacy which Baudelaire's monotonous naming undermines. Indeed, in the English text differences in referentiality are foregrounded from the beginning, as can be observed from the various ways in which the three characters interpret the value of the gold bug. Initially, for Jupiter, the bug is made of real gold; for Legrand, it is valuable from a naturalist's point of view, while this enthusiasm is not shared by the narrator, who reacts by "wishing the whole tribe of *scarabæi* at the devil" (Mabbott 1978: 808, line 67). Moreover, in Jupiter's case, his opinion of the bug changes over the course of the narrative, and teeters between two referents, namely a bug made of gold, and a dangerous insect. Meanwhile, in Legrand's mind, there is never a shade of doubt as to what the object really is, though as has already been shown, he lets the narrator believe for a while that he too attributes mysterious powers to it. As a result, the narrator almost joins Jupiter in believing

that the bug has mysterious powers, thus also nearly changing his earlier interpretation of it.

In Poe's text, it is not only in the way the characters perceive and name it that the gold bug forms an illustration of shifting reference; there are further indications that the function of the gold bug in this narrative is not a symbol, and that its changing reference is an essential undertone. Legrand, having become exasperated by the narrator's attitude towards him, puts on a show which becomes a diversion in itself, and when he explains his behaviour later on, he literally describes the "mystifying" power which the gold bug also exercises on the reader – and the message, coming at the end of the story, is here directed as much at the narrator as at the reader:

Why, to be frank, I felt somewhat annoyed by your evident suspicions touching my sanity, and so resolved to punish you quietly, in my own way, by a bit of a sober mystification. For this reason I swung the beetle, and for this reason I let it fall from the tree. (Mabbott 1978: 844, lines 1290-1294)

As has already been pointed out, these events are a part of the plot, and they are therefore present in all three versions. So far then, "The Gold Bug" forms an adequate example of a text creating its own ideal reader (which, ironically, is what Ricardou liked about it) and both the characters and the reader are tempted to invest more meaning in the object than it deserves (a temptation which is also explained by the fact that it is, after all, the title of the story). Or as Williams puts it:

Poe swings the beetle in front of the eyes of the reader right from the point of entry into the story – the title – and symbolic interpretation of the bug places the reader in the narrator's dilemma: is Poe, like Legrand, offering us a "sober mystification" which proves only a deceptive opportunity for such a reading? (Williams 1982: 658-659)

The answer to this question is straightforward after reading Poe's and Pichot's texts, but as Ricardou's interpretation shows, more problematic after reading Baudelaire's. With its shifting reference, a symbolic interpretation of the beetle is

not really tenable in the English text, whereas Ricardou's example shows that the monotone reference in Baudelaire's version makes it less obvious that the "scarabée" is a decoy, inserted by Poe to distract and mislead the reader. Pichot's version, on the other hand, has, through his choice of "carabé," added two more elements of confusion to the series of possible interpretations. Moreover, since the word "carabé" uniquely belongs to Jupiter, Pichot at the same time underscores how strongly the latter's attitude towards referentiality differs from that of his companions. With his variation in signifiers, Pichot has thus managed to retain a fundamental theme of the story which disappears in Baudelaire's translation.

The English text and Pichot's version, then, both yield a "lighter" reading of the story, which also ignores any elements which may suggest that this story has anything of the fantastic in it – a suggestion which will be re-examined at a later stage in this chapter. Instead of being pervasively present under the same name, the beetle's appearance under various names underlines both its elusiveness and the characters' different perceptions of it. All of this is absent from Baudelaire's version, and Ricardou's symbolic reading thus becomes substantial proof that Baudelaire's translation here yields a different reading than the original. The comparison with Pichot, on the other hand, shows that it was certainly feasible to reproduce the effects of the original.

8.6. Reference, Decoding and Misfired Speech Acts

8.6.1. From Reference to Decoding: Three Different Sociolects

The different attitudes to referentiality are visible throughout the text, and Poe chose to represent these differences textually by allotting a different social dialect, or sociolect, to each of the three characters. A sociolect is defined by Lane-Mercier as:

... the textual representation of "non-standard" speech patterns that manifest both the socio-cultural forces which have shaped the speaker's

linguistic competence and the various socio-cultural groups to which the speaker belongs. (Lane-Mercier 1997: 45)

In other words, sociolects are non-standard speech patterns occurring in written language, which reveal and are determined by the character's social background. Hatim and Mason call them "social dialects":

Social dialects emerge in response to social stratification within a speech community. ... Principles of equivalence demand that we attempt to relay the full impact of social dialect, including whatever discursual force it may carry. (Hatim and Mason 1990: 42)

Hatim and Mason's reference to the "demand(s)" of "principles of equivalence" suggests that sociolects are the type of textual features around which some of the more ethically charged and prescriptively oriented discussions in Translation Studies take place. This trend is exemplified by Lane-Mercier, who states that:

Given the cultural stereotypes, identity constructions and power relations reflected ... by literary sociolects, their translation can be seen as paradigmatic of the manner in which a "violent" meaning-producing aesthetic, ideological and political *engagement* is required on the part of the translating subject. (Lane-Mercier 1997: 45)

Lane-Mercier's position was partly refuted by the present author in an article entitled "The Translation of Sociolects: A Paradigm of Ideological Issues in Translation?" (Wallaert 2001), where the claim is made that sociolects are not necessarily paradigmatic of the translator's ideological or political stance, not any more than for instance, the translation of metaphors, the reason being that, though they are definitely a problematic issue in translation, their function can differ greatly from text to text, and consequently, the weight of the decision in relaying (or not) a sociolect also varies. This claim will be borne out in the following sections.

8.6.2. The Translation of Sociolects in “The Gold Bug”

In “The Gold Bug” the first and basic function of the sociolects is to socially define their users, as is usually the case, and the following discussion will begin with an examination as to how the translators have dealt with each sociolect.

Legrand's Sociolect

In Poe's text the language of Legrand is a relatively standard and formal sociolect that characterizes him as an educated person and an amateur scientist – Legrand uses Latin terms, such as “*scarabæus*,” on several occasions, and “*solus*” on one occasion (Mabbott 1978: 813, line 242), which are neutralised by both translators, who opt for the “equivalent” French word (“*scarabée*” and “*seul*”). In English, Legrand's sociolect, especially when explaining his methods in decoding the cipher, actually reminds one of the tone of Poe's essay “A Few Words on Secret Writing,” the great difference being that in “The Gold Bug,” Legrand's speech occurs as a direct report of spoken discourse, which slightly affects its style. Here is a sample of Legrand's speech:

Circumstances, and a certain bias of mind, have led me to take interest in such riddles, and it may be doubted whether human ingenuity can construct an enigma which human ingenuity may not, by proper application, resolve.
(Mabbott 1978: 835, lines 1007-1010)

Incidentally, Legrand here repeats a phrase which occurs in Poe's article “A Few Words on Secret Writing”:

Few persons can be made to believe that it is not quite an easy thing to invent a method of secret writing which shall baffle investigation. Yet it may be roundly asserted that human ingenuity cannot concoct a cipher which human ingenuity cannot solve.
(Poe 1984 [1841]: 1278)

Legrand thus speaks what must have constituted for Poe the type of language fit for serious discussions of scientific and learned subjects, and the two translators reproduced Legrand's language as follows:

Pichot

Les circonstances, une certaine disposition d'esprit, m'ont fait prendre intérêt à ces sortes de logogripes, et je doute que l'intelligence humaine puisse combiner une énigme de ce genre, dont l'intelligence humaine ne puisse parvenir à trouver le mot.

(Appendix B: 405)

Baudelaire

Les circonstances et une certaine inclinaison d'esprit m'ont amené à prendre intérêt à ces sortes d'énigmes, et il est vraiment douteux que l'ingéniosité humaine puisse créer une énigme dont l'ingéniosité humaine ne vienne pas à bout par une application suffisante.

(Le Dantec 1951: 95, lines 1384-1389)

A quick comparison shows that on the one hand, Pichot has accentuated the scientist in Legrand by his use of "logogripes," and that in general, Pichot's Legrand is more direct and less formal than Poe's: Pichot's "je doute que" for Poe's "it may be doubted that," where Baudelaire writes "il est douteux," can be cited as an example of this. Pichot also commits ellipsis when he drops the phrases "by proper application" and "at once."

Jupiter's Sociolect

In Poe's text, Jupiter's language typifies him as a former slave, and his sociolect can be called "African American Vernacular English" (AAVE), though this does not specify the period to which the vernacular belongs – a problem that can be solved by putting "nineteenth-century" in front of the phrase. In spite of this defect, AAVE seems more precise than Labov's term "Black English Vernacular" – which Judith Lavoie applies to the sociolect used in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, but which does not allow to differentiate between an American and other Anglophone contexts (Lavoie 1994: 116).

It is when one examines the translation of Jupiter's sociolect that one sees the substantial differences between Baudelaire's translation and the other two texts more clearly. Of the two translations, Baudelaire's is the only one where Jupiter speaks the same language as the other protagonists. Baudelaire explains his decision not to retain Jupiter's sociolectal difference in what constitutes the most substantial auctorial footnote accompanying any of his translations of Poe's fiction:

Le nègre parlera toujours dans une espèce de patois anglais que le patois nègre français n'imiterait pas mieux que le bas-normand ou le breton traduirait l'irlandais. En se rappelant les patois figuratifs de Balzac, on se fera une idée de ce que ce moyen un peu physique peut ajouter de pittoresque et de comique, mais j'ai dû renoncer à m'en servir faute d'équivalent. (Le Dantec 1951: 1071)

First of all, the remark could be ventured that Baudelaire's simile here suggests that his interest in foreign or minority languages was limited – a trait which would certainly not have been rare in his days. His reference to the use of sociolects by Balzac is not surprising either, since Balzac indeed frequently used this stylistic device in his prose. This note immediately reveals two aspects of Baudelaire's project for this translation. Firstly, it shows that Baudelaire explains his decision not to translate Jupiter's sociolectal difference by the fact that it didn't coincide with his own literary tastes – which is consistent with his project of personal appropriation of Poe's text. Secondly, the reference to Balzac shows that Baudelaire did not want Poe to resemble Balzac, or, more generally, that Baudelaire did not want Poe to resemble any other French literary prose. In any case, Pichot's translation shows that Baudelaire's decision is not dictated by textual or linguistic constraints – though he does claim it to be so determined, which in turn reminds one of the importance of reading para-text with a sceptical eye. Pichot's translation shows that Baudelaire's "faute d'équivalent" is only a half-truth, since he creates an equivalent for Jupiter's sociolect, and though it is probably not the most creative of interventions, it does allow Pichot to maintain Jupiter's sociolectal difference.

The Narrator's Sociolect

Poe's narrator's speech places him unmistakably in the category of the upper-class Southern urbanite: it is specked with the formulaic expressions and circumspect phrases used in polite society, and the narrator's entire attitude smacks of the urban snob. This is strongly reflected in his language, through which he manifests a narrow-mindedness destined to form an impediment to his understanding of the events in the story. Moreover, his attitude towards the other characters, including Legrand, is filled with a condescension which his good manners do not always attempt to hide. There is a specific instance of a dialogue which illustrates very clearly most of the aspects of the narrator's sociolect, while at the same time allowing a good view of how the two translators dealt with these sociolects. The sequence occurs when the narrator is visited by Jupiter and is trying to find out what is wrong with Legrand:

Pichot

– *Eh bien, Jupin, vous avez peut-être raison. Mais à quelle heureuse circonstance suis-je redevable de votre visite? M. Legrand vous a-t-il chargé de quelque message pour moi?*

– *Non, massa; moi apporter lettre que voici. Et il me présenta un billet ...*
(Appendix B: 377)

Baudelaire

– *Au fait, Jupiter, tu as peut-être raison; mais à quelle heureuse circonstance dois-je l'honneur de ta visite aujourd'hui?*

– *Que voulez-vous dire, massa?*

– *M'apportes-tu un message de Mr. Legrand?*

– *Non, massa, je vous apporte une lettre que voici. Et Jupiter me tendit un papier ...*

(Le Dantec 1951: 71, lines 268-275)

Poe

“Well, Jup, perhaps you're right; but to what fortunate circumstance am I to attribute the honour of a visit from you today?”

“What de matter, massa?”

“Did you bring any message form Legrand?”

“No, massa, I bring dis here pissel,” and here Jupiter handed me a note ...

Poe's narrator's question "to what fortunate circumstance am I to attribute the honour of a visit from you today?" is typical of that character, and Baudelaire's omission of "attribute," compared with Pichot's "suis-je redevable" here shows Pichot reproducing the formal sociolect of the narrator more closely. On the other hand, Pichot's translation of Jupiter's sociolect could generally be seen as a drive for domestication, especially when one remembers Baudelaire's reminder that something similar (i.e. Balzac) already exists in French literature. However, when Jupiter's univocal reference prevents him from understanding the narrator's formulaic expression, Pichot omits Jupiter's perplexed "What de matter, massa?" which he must have considered a comical frill. Pichot's strategy is then both a domesticating and a fluency strategy. Still, besides evidencing a lack of consistency in Pichot's approach, neither of these strategies indicate a clear stance on Pichot's part – an observation which also contradicts Lane-Mercier's previously quoted statement regarding the ideological significance of the translation of sociolects. On the other hand, though Baudelaire does not omit anything, he does not reproduce Jupiter's sociolectal difference, with the result that in Baudelaire's version, Jupiter's difficulty in understanding the narrator is not explained by his sociolectal difference, but simply makes him look stupid.

In the above case it was Jupiter's univocal referentiality which causes the misunderstanding between him and the narrator to occur, and it will by now have become clear that in "The Gold Bug" the sociolects play a much larger role than simply being a "moyen physique" to achieve comic effect, and that besides their basic function of situating the characters socially, they play an additional role in Poe's text.

8.6.3. The Illocutionary Force of Sociolects in a Self-Referential Text

When looking at Poe's original text, it becomes clear that in "The Gold Bug," besides defining their characters' social background, the sociolects have a very

specific textual function that is generated by the thematic content of the story. As Williams indicates, this story is centred on “the contingency of meaning upon conventions of use and context” (Williams 1982: 151). The sociolects thus occur here in a text that is self-referential, a term which refers to the type of literary texts that are written to talk about literature or language in general.

A well-known example of such texts is J.L. Borges’ pseudo-critical text on Cervantes’ Quixote, “Pierre Ménard, auteur du Quixote” (Borges 1993), where Borges claims different authorship for identical extracts of the Quixote, which he compares among each other. The text is a spoof examination of the problems involved in defining original authorship, and illustrates the similarities that can exist between criticism, rewriting and even translation. The identical extracts that feature in Borges’ text thus have the function of saying something about text, language and literary criticism, simply by featuring in this self-referential or self-reflexive text, and it is therefore possible to attribute what Austin called “illocutionary force” to them. Indeed, these extracts are performatives: by being present in the text, they help the author say something about language and writing. In Austin’s words, these extracts are a “performance of an act *in* saying something, as opposed to performance of an act *of* saying something” (Austin 1962: 99). Self-referential texts, as Lefevere indicates, often offer serious dilemmas to translators: “... whenever language moves on the illocutionary, rather than the locutionary level, ... it threatens to become an aporia for translators” (Lefevere 1992a: 58).

The sociolectal differences and the misunderstandings which they generate in “The Gold Bug” fulfil precisely such an illocutionary function. The sociolects do not just feature in the story to give each character a different social background, but are there to illustrate the fact that the relationship which a language user holds with language will determine his ability to decode – both on a linguistic and on a meta-linguistic level. Poe makes it abundantly clear that he wanted this theme to shine through the lines of his story through a series of foregrounded elements, namely the many misfired speech acts which pervade the narrative and are caused

by the sociolectal clashes between the three characters. These are a handy and subtle device to foreground the different linguistic skills of the characters, and the following section will concern the way in which two translators dealt with this central element.

The first example is one where Jupiter's sociolectal difference affects, for a short while, the storyline. The events occur when the three protagonists have arrived at the tulip tree from which the exact location of the treasure can be determined. Jupiter has found the skull nailed to one of its branches, and is asked by Legrand to let the beetle drop through the left eye of the skull. But Jupiter is confused:

Pichot

– *C'est parfait. A présent, Jupiter, tu vas faire exactement ce que je vais te dire. M'entends-tu bien?*

– *Oui, massa.*

– *En ce cas, attention! Cherche l'œil gauche de la tête de mort.*

– *Oh! oh! ... être drôle. Moi pas voir l'œil gauche du tout.*

(Appendix B: 387-388)

Baudelaire

– *Bien! maintenant, Jupiter, fais exactement ce que je vais te dire; – tu m'entends?*

– *Oui, massa.*

– *Fais bien attention! – Trouve l'œil gauche du crâne.*

– *Oh! oh! voilà qui est drôle. Il n'y a pas d'œil gauche du tout!*

(Le Dantec 1951: 80, lines 634-641)

Poe

“Well, now, Jupiter, do exactly as I tell you – do you hear?”

“Yes, massa.”

“Pay attention then! – find the left eye of the skull.”

“Hum! Hoo! Dat's good! Why dar aint no eye lef at all.”

(Mabbott 1978: 821, lines 501-505)

Poe's pun on the homonymy between the past participle and the adjective “left” is indeed quite impossible to translate, and both translators opt for the same solution: to keep the meaning of the past participle “left,” and to translate at the same time using the adjective “gauche,” thus retaining the two causes of Jupiter's confusion.

Still, since Jupiter's language use in Baudelaire is unmarked, it is Baudelaire's version which makes his character seem all the more dumb, since his confusion about left and right is not explained by a more general difficulty in understanding language in context, and this is a serious alteration of Jupiter's role in the story, since all the misfired speech acts in which Jupiter participates in Baudelaire's version will be attributed to his stupidity, instead of his sociolectal difference. Kempton's discussion of "The Gold Bug" reveals that, due to the contrast between Jupiter's and the other characters' language, Jupiter actually plays an important part in finding the treasure. Kempton's thesis is that all the protagonists (including the non-speaking ones, namely the local inhabitants that help Legrand find his clues), actually contribute to the finding of the treasure, but that the reader is naturally led to consider Legrand as sole riddle-solver. Jupiter's refusal to understand language in context and his general linguistic subversiveness can be seen, according to Kempton, as a manifestation of the "wit of the slave" (Kempton 1987: 12), who is present to help the other characters understand the events. In this way, what becomes, in Baudelaire's translation, manifestations of Jupiter's doltishness, are actually, in Poe's text, linguistic challenges that prompt the other characters to act and think appropriately.

This negative effect of Baudelaire's non-translation of Jupiter's sociolectal difference can also be observed in other instances of misunderstandings in which Poe used Jupiter's sociolect as an opportunity to create sociolectal clashes. One of these features in a passage where Jupiter is trying to explain to the narrator what he thinks is wrong with his master:

Pichot

– *Moi être certain massa Will avoir été mordu à la tête par carabé d'or.*

– *Et qu'est-ce qui vous fait supposer cela, Jupiter?*

– *Parce que moi n'avoir jamais vu carabé enragé comme celui-là, massa; lui mordre et égratigner tout ce qui approchait lui.*

(Appendix B: 377)

Baudelaire

– *Je suis sûr que massa Will a été mordu quelque part à la tête par ce scarabée d'or.*

– *Et quelle raison as-tu, Jupiter, pour faire une pareille supposition?*

– *Il a bien assez de pinces pour cela, massa, et une bouche aussi; je n'ai jamais vu un scarabée aussi endiablé; – il attrape et il mord tout ce qui l'approche.*

(Le Dantec 1951: 71, lines 254-259)

Poe

“De bug – I’m berry sartain dat Massa Will bin bit somewhere bout de head by dat goole bug.”

“And what cause have you, Jupiter, for such a supposition?”

“Claws enuff, massa, and mouff too. I neber did see sich a d-d bug – he kick and he bite ebery ting what cum near him.”

(Mabbott 1978: 812, lines 206-210)

In this example, the pun is again quite untranslatable, and it seems natural for both translators to have avoided it. However, Baudelaire’s translation, unmarked by sociolectal difference, makes Jupiter not only look dumb, but also completely confused – there is no question to elicit the response he gives. Pichot, who has maintained Jupiter’s sociolectal difference, avoids this by using “Parce que,” which establishes coherence in the sequence. The contrast between what Baudelaire’s Jupiter says and the way he says it, again shows that it is difficult to make a version of “The Gold Bug” stand up as a coherent whole without retaining at least Jupiter’s sociolectal difference. This fact is proven over and over again, with each misfired speech act, and with each dialogue that illustrates the sociolectal difference between the characters. That is also why it is so strange to find, in Baudelaire’s translation, instances where Legrand uses the polite form to address Jupiter (e.g. “Mettons que vous avez raison, Jupiter” (Le Dantec 1951: 67, line 104)). An exchange like this is wholly incongruent with the relationships which Poe established through his use of sociolects.

8.6.4. The Currents Underlying an “Elementary Kind of Comedy”

It therefore becomes very difficult to agree with Patrick Quinn’s comments on Baudelaire’s translation – which verbally echo Baudelaire’s own statement:

Baudelaire does not try to duplicate in French the dialect speech of Jupiter, and this omission, for modern taste, amounts to genuine improvement. At one point in the story Poe falls victim to the fatally easy device of so-called humorous writers by making as pronounced as possible the abyss between the elegant speech of the narrator and the nearly unintelligible speech of the Negro. This elementary kind of comedy is not present in “Le scarabée d’or.” (Quinn 1957: 152)

The ineluctability of Jupiter’s sociolect and the misfired speech acts which further underscore these sociolectal clashes prove Quinn wrong. This is why it has been pointed out that, though Pichot does translate Jupiter’s sociolectal difference, his omission of some of these misfired speech acts shows that he had not seized *all* the implications of the story’s central theme. Pichot’s use of a sociolect for Jupiter simply shows him doing what most translators of his day were likely to have done: to stick to the original as closely as possible, but – and this is most likely the reason why he leaves out the misfired speech acts – not at the cost of fluency, a strategy which corresponds entirely with his own description of his project and stance as a translator. This is precisely the opposite of Baudelaire’s continuing drive for a high degree of literalism, which has now been contradicted by his intervention on Jupiter’s sociolect, and which in turn shows that Baudelaire’s project as a translator was not always consistent with his own claims.

Moreover, there is a specific aspect of Baudelaire’s *position* as translator that should be highlighted here, and for which the comparison between Baudelaire and an experienced translator such as Pichot becomes all the more valuable. As was shown in Chapter Four, Baudelaire did not have the linguistic skills in English that Pichot had, and Baudelaire’s difficulties in English are all the more visible when he translates a non-standard variety of English. For instance, when Poe’s Jupiter tries to calm down the exasperated narrator he says:

“Why, massa, taint worf for to git mad bout de matter” (Mabbott 1978: 811, line 182), which Baudelaire translates as “– Oh! massa, c’est bien inutile de se creuser la tête” (Le Dantec 1951: 70, lines 225-226), although “se creuser la tête” is defined as “réfléchir intensément” (*Trésor* 6: 474). The continuation of this sequence contains another trap for Baudelaire. When Jupiter describes Legrand’s worrisome condition, he says that his master looks as “white as a gose” (Mabbott 1978: 811-812, lines 184-187), which Baudelaire translates as “pâle comme une oie” (Le Dantec 1951: 70, lines 226-229). Baudelaire’s mistake was also noticed by Richard, who added the following note: “Baudelaire, induit en erreur par le charabia de Jupiter, confond avec goose” (Richard 1989: 1397).

Two conclusions can thus be drawn from this section. Firstly, Baudelaire clearly had difficulties in translating the sociolect of Jupiter, and it caused him to write a few mistranslations. Secondly, the justification Baudelaire gives in his note for not relaying Jupiter’s sociolect (“faute d’équivalent en français”) is only a half-truth, and the non-translation of Jupiter’s sociolectal difference is more adequately explained by Baudelaire’s disdain for the use of sociolects in narrative prose and his desire to differentiate Poe from what already existed in the target literature, as a part of his project of personal appropriation.

8.7. Scenery and Atmosphere

As was also indicated during the pre-reading stage, Baudelaire’s translation produces an atmosphere and scenery which feel more menacing than either Pichot’s translation or Poe’s original text do. Certain details in Baudelaire’s translation explain this impression, and though they are not pervasive, their number is significant enough to have an impact on the overall reading yielded by his text. Moreover, one should not forget Ricardou’s impression that there was something of the fantastic in this story, and although Ricardou’s statement refers to the “symbolic” occurrence of the devil in Baudelaire’s text, it seems useful to find further explanations for his impression. The change in Baudelaire’s text

towards a more menacing atmosphere also points in a direction already explored in the previous chapter, namely that Baudelaire may have added some of the morbidity which he appreciated so much in Poe, and which was explained by referring to his literary tastes, more precisely his enthusiasm for *bousingot* literature.

Before entering into the comparative details of this aspect of Baudelaire's translation of "The Gold Bug," it should be pointed out again that landscape plays a significant role in this story, since it is not merely the backdrop to the story, but serves the purpose of providing the information and clues which will lead to the discovery of the treasure. The beach where the bug and the parchment first appear, and the landmarks on the continent which need to be found in order to locate the treasure, all contain important clues in the narrative structure. Moreover, it is a landscape that did not spring from Poe's imagination, since the Charleston peninsula and more specifically Sullivan's Island, turn out to be places where Poe actually spent a period of his life. As Silverman's biography testifies, during 1827 Poe spent about thirteen months in the region, when he was a private in the first regiment of artillery in the U.S. Army, which was lodged at Fort Moultrie:

... in November [1827] the company moved to Fort Moultrie, South Carolina, on an island in the main entrance to Charleston Harbor.
(Silverman 1992: 42)

The differences between Poe's and Baudelaire's text with regards to scenery and atmosphere did not go unnoticed by Patrick Quinn, and his comments on the changes introduced by Baudelaire are an eloquent illustration of his biased approach as a "critic" of the Baudelaire translations:

Baudelaire, in the style of Delacroix, prefers a scene that is more menacingly suggestive ... all the other words of interest in the French passage add an atmosphere of peril, gloom, and mystery to a landscape which Poe was satisfied to present merely as wild and difficult of access.
(Quinn 1957: 132-133)

Whether this change in effect could by any chance be considered ill-fitted for a story which Poe ranked among his “tales of ratiocination” – i.e. tales in which dry reasoning, analysis and deductive logic are the main themes – does not enter into the possibilities considered by Quinn. It thus appears that Quinn judges that Baudelaire’s appropriation of Poe is always a good thing in every sense – even when his changes do not rhyme with the nature of the text in which they occur. These comments will be re-examined at the end of this section.

The first difference between Baudelaire’s and Poe’s scenery occurs at the very beginning of the narrator’s descriptions of Sullivan’s Island, and its impact on the reader’s impression of the place, occurring at the beginning of the story, is thus all the more profound:

Baudelaire

... toute l’île, à l’exception de ce point occidental et d’un espace triste et blanchâtre qui borde la mer, est couverte d’épaisses broussailles de myrte odoriférant, si estimé par les horticulteurs anglais.

(Le Dantec 1951: 65, lines 20-24)

Poe

... the whole island, with the exception of this western point, and a line of hard, white beach on the seacoast, is covered with a dense undergrowth of the sweet myrtle, so much prized by the horticulturists of England.

(Mabbott 1978: 807, lines 16-20)

With his addition of “triste,” (which replaces, but certainly does not translate “hard”), his replacement of “beach” (usually an attractive place) by the much less attractive “espace,” and his use of the slightly depreciating “blanchâtre,” which actually indicates a shade of grey (*Trésor* 4: 563: “Dont la couleur tire sur le blanc. ... Syn. *Blafard, blème*”), Baudelaire shows that he wanted the scene to look more mournful than Poe saw it. Nothing whatsoever in Poe’s text explains Baudelaire’s choice of “triste,” and the passage does not contain particular linguistic difficulties, so Baudelaire’s changes are here indeed a conscious effort to change the atmosphere. Pichot’s translation, meanwhile, is also interesting,

because it reveals that translator's interest in natural landscapes, and his enthusiasm for the more scientific nature of this story – the “rational” side of Poe.

Pichot

... à l'exception de cette pointe occidentale, et de la grève formée d'une substance calcaire, qui s'étend, comme une lisière blanchâtre, du côté de la mer, l'île entière offre l'aspect d'un grand buisson de myrtes ...
(Appendix B: 370)

Pichot here adds a few elements to the botanical and geological details given in the original. The extended noun phrase “la grève formée d’une substance calcaire, qui s’étend comme une lisière blanchâtre,” for instance, though also introducing the unnecessarily grey “blanchâtre,” adds geological information to Poe’s description, especially with Pichot’s use of “grève,” which the *Trésor* defines as a “terrain plat et uni, généralement constitué de sable et de graviers, sis au bord d’un cours d’eau ou de la mer” (*Trésor* 9: 487), and his use of “lisière,” which corresponds to the meaning given in the *Trésor* of “bordure, partie extrême d’un terrain, d’une région, d’un élément du paysage” (*Trésor* 10: 1267). Pichot’s additions, however, do not change the overall effect of the scenic description, which, as all the others in the story, contains a number of botanical and geological details which illustrate the narrator’s and Legrand’s interest in these things. The overall effect of Pichot’s translation is therefore not as divergent from Poe’s text as Baudelaire’s has become. Though Pichot added some details, he has not added anything to the general atmosphere, whereas Baudelaire consciously amends the description and changes it into something more gloomy.

A series of such interventions on Baudelaire’s part is also found in the following passage, where the narrator gives a description of the landscape through which the characters travel on their way to the treasure:

Pichot

Nous traversâmes dans un batelet le canal qui sépare l'île de la terre ferme, et gravissant les hauteurs du continent, nous avançâmes, dans la direction du nord-ouest, à travers un pays sauvage et désert, où l'on n'apercevait aucun vestige de créatures humaines. ... Nous marchâmes ainsi pendant deux heures environ, et le soleil se couchait au

moment où nous entrions dans une région incomparablement plus désolée que tout ce que nous avons vu jusqu'alors. C'était une sorte de plateau situé vers le sommet d'une montagne presque inaccessible, couverte, de la base à la cime, de bois entremêlés d'immenses quartiers de roche. Ces blocs, épars çà et là, n'étaient souvent soutenus que par les arbres placés immédiatement au-dessous, et sans lesquels ils auraient roulé dans les vallées. Des ravins profonds, sillonnant le sol dans tous les sens, ajoutaient encore à la sublime horreur du paysage
(Appendix B: 383)

Baudelaire

Nous traversâmes dans un esquif la crique à la pointe de l'île, et, grim pant sur les terrains montueux de la rive opposée, nous nous dirigeâmes vers le nord-ouest, à travers un pays horriblement sauvage et désolé, où il était impossible de découvrir la trace d'un pied humain. ... Nous marchâmes ainsi deux heures environ, et le soleil était au moment de se coucher quand nous entrâmes dans une région infiniment plus sinistre que tout ce que nous avons vu jusqu'alors. C'était une espèce de plateau près du sommet d'une montagne affreusement escarpée, couverte de bois de la base au sommet, et semée d'énormes blocs de pierre qui semblaient éparpillés pêle-mêle sur le sol, et dont plusieurs se seraient infailliblement précipités dans les vallées inférieures sans le secours des arbres contre lesquels ils s'appuyaient. De profondes ravines irradiaient dans diverses directions et donnaient à la scène un caractère de solennité plus lugubre.
(Le Dantec 1951: 76, lines 463-483)

Poe

We crossed the creek at the head of the island by means of a skiff, and, ascending the high grounds on the shore of the main land, proceeded, in a northwesterly direction, through a tract of country excessively wild and desolate, where no trace of a human footstep was to be seen. ... In this manner we journeyed for about two hours, and the sun was just setting when we entered a region infinitely more dreary than any yet seen. It was a species of table land, near the summit of an almost inaccessible hill, densely wooded from base to pinnacle, and interspersed with huge crags that appeared to lie loosely upon the soil, and in many cases were prevented from precipitating themselves into the valleys below, merely by the support of the trees against which they reclined. Deep ravines, in various directions, gave an air of still sterner solemnity to the scene.
(Mabbott 1978: 817, lines 367-383)

Again, a number of details in Baudelaire's translation push the scenery in a more menacing direction. Firstly, the "high grounds" which the three protagonists "ascend" on the continent, have become a region that is "montueux," on which the characters have to "grimper," which, as its definition in the *Trésor* indicates, is

quite a bit more physically exerting and possibly dangerous than “ascend” – “grimper” is mainly defined as “monter en s’agrippant des pieds et éventuellement des mains” (*Trésor* 9: 516)). Pichot, though to a lesser degree than Baudelaire, also adds to the physical exertion by using “gravir” (“monter péniblement, éventuellement en s’aidant des mains” (*Trésor* 9: 457)). More relevant is the fact that, once on the continent, Poe’s characters travel through an “excessively wild and desolate” region, where Baudelaire translates “excessively” by “horriblement” – an addition of horror wholly uncalled for by anything in the original, and which does not occur in Pichot’s text either. Thirdly, the characters then arrive at a region “infinitely more dreary than any yet seen,” which, in Baudelaire’s text, becomes “sinistre.” Though “sinistre” cannot be considered a mistranslation, since “dreary,” according to *OED*, can also mean “Dismal, gloomy, repulsively dull or uninteresting” (*OED* 3: 657), and is translated in *Harrap’s* as “triste, morne, lugubre.” (*Harrap’s* 3, 1980: 62), Baudelaire again chooses the most morbid of all the options.

Another difference is that in Poe’s text the characters come upon a “hill,” which, strangely enough, becomes a “montagne” in both translations, and it is again more menacing in Baudelaire’s text since, instead of being “almost inaccessible” (probably because of the vegetation growing on it), has become “affreusement escarpée,” with the adverb of “affreux” (generally defined in the *Trésor* as “Qui inspire ou est propre à inspirer tous les degrés de l’horreur ou de l’angoisse douloureuse” (*Trésor* 2: 49)) thus again introducing a menacing aspect into the atmosphere. In Baudelaire’s version, moreover, the landscape is more menacing because it seems more alive, and this is because Baudelaire creates a feeling of unknown and external agency: the “huge crags which appear to lie loosely upon the soil,” are “éparpillés pêle mêle” in Baudelaire’s text, i.e. they are randomly scattered about, as if some giant or other invisible force has thrown them there. Moreover, the ravines are the agents that carve up the landscape with streaks of light (“irradiaient dans diverses directions et donnaient à la scène ...”). Lastly, the overall impression which Baudelaire’s landscape leaves is not, as in Poe,

“solemn,” but “lugubre,” defined by the *Trésor* as “relatif à la mort, aux funérailles” (*Trésor* 11: 40).

As the reader will have noticed, Pichot’s landscape is also slightly altered, but his addition of “sublime horreur” being the only addition of the sort that features in his translation, one cannot really consider this a change of overall atmosphere. Baudelaire’s text thus clearly presents a more pervasive slant towards the morbid, and does so from the beginning of the story onwards. These additions no longer come as a surprise on Baudelaire’s part. As we have already seen in Chapter Seven, they are an integral part of his project for the *translatio* of Poe.

8.8. Conclusions: Answering Berman’s questions and tracing the translators’ projects, stances and horizons in the translations

The conclusions of this chapter will again be subdivided into several sections. First, the questions which are asked of the translations as independent texts will be answered, before linking up the differences produced by the translations with the translators’ respective stances, projects and horizons.

8.8.1. Question One

To the question whether the texts are linguistically and structurally cohesive, the analysis has provided a number of facts that can help answer that question for both translations. For Baudelaire’s translation, a number of inconsistencies were noted. The character of Jupiter is here often incongruent and contradictory, and his role is unclear, hovering between parts of a Greek chorus (in Kempton’s function of representing the “wit of the slave,” whose comments on the action help it to proceed), and that of, simply, a fragmented character and a dimwit, whose main function is to be an object of ridicule, and to subvert the course of events. Though Baudelaire’s treatment of Jupiter in a way homogenizes the text by leaving out his sociolectal difference, the non-translation of this difference in

Baudelaire's translation gives Jupiter a subversive role, and the inexplicability of his actions and responses may also tend the narrative in a more "fantastic" direction (as Ricardou named it, cf. *supra*). Baudelaire's Jupiter thus mainly forms an obstacle to the cohesion of the narrative because his inconsistent behaviour is in no way explained by his sociolectal difference. Pichot's translation does not suffer from this lack of cohesion, since Pichot reproduces Jupiter's sociolectal difference, and the latter's linguistic behaviour thus coincides with the whole of his character and actions.

Baudelaire's monotonous denotation of the object of the gold bug could also be seen as a drive for more cohesion, were it not for the nefarious effect it has of introducing the possibility of a symbolic reading into a story that confounds the reader even further as to the function of the gold bug. As May puts it, Poe's tales of ratiocination are "works in which questions of interpretation are not outside the body of the story but are involved in every stage of the narrative development" (May 1991: 82), and this means that in Poe's story, it is the text which establishes that the gold bug is a decoy. Baudelaire's single denotation for the gold bug adds a possibility of interpretation which is established on the basis of symbolisms that exist *outside* of the text, a fact which is confirmed by Ricardou's analysis, in which reference to Egyptian hieroglyphs is used to further establish the symbolic link between the beetle, the sun and the treasure. Baudelaire's treatment of the object of the gold bug therefore does not entail greater textual cohesion, but instead makes Poe's "detective" story tend towards a different, more symbolically laden and much less rationalistic text. Pichot's translation, on the other hand, retains the variation in the denotations of the object of the beetle, and his addition of "carabé" does not exceed the effects contained in the original, thus reproducing structural and linguistic cohesion where the original also showed it. Moreover, credit should be given where credit is due, and state that Pichot's use of "carabé" and the ambiguity contained in that term is a subtlety which actually increases the cohesion in his translation, and shows that Pichot had understood the main import of the story.

8.8.2. Question Two

Unlike “La chute de la Maison Usher” Baudelaire’s “Le scarabée d’or” does not feature any neologisms, and maintains the very literal strategy which he was also seen to deploy in Chapter Seven. However, this certainly does not mean that Baudelaire did what Berman would have called “écrire étranger.”

Though Baudelaire refers to the use of sociolects as a home-grown procedure, his decision not to translate the sociolectal difference does not necessarily emanate from an impulse to retain the foreignness of the text, but, as was demonstrated, was a combination both of avoiding the problems which Jupiter’s sociolect were causing him, and of adapting the story to his personal taste. One should also remember the great success which other American novels in which sociolects feature largely, like *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and, later on, *Huckleberry Finn*, had in France. From this perspective, translating the sociolectal differences in “The Gold Bug,” as Pichot did, could actually have helped to increase its Americanness in the minds of nineteenth-century readers, whereas neutralising these differences did not necessarily domesticate the text, though it did adapt it to Baudelaire’s personal literary preferences.

The previous chapter also revealed that Baudelaire’s very literal strategies sometimes produce strange and unidiomatic results, and were not necessarily proof of a specific stance in translation, but instead constitute evidence that, if Baudelaire decided on a word-for-word rendering of the original, this may have simply been due to a lack of linguistic skills and of craftsmanship as a translator. This iconoclastic point will be illustrated with a few examples from Baudelaire’s “Le scarabée d’or.”

The first example was mentioned during the pre-reading stage, where it was indicated that it has a significant impact on the speed at which the plot is developed in Baudelaire’s text. The reader may be reminded that, at the beginning of the narrative, when Legrand takes the parchment out of his pocket for the first

time, he does not realise it is parchment, and the narrator continues to believe that the thing on which Legrand writes is a piece of paper. Poe used the less common word “foolscap” in this instance, but Baudelaire translated this with “vélin,” going by what he found later in the text, whereas Pichot (whose translation, incidentally, Baudelaire could have consulted) opted for the much more appropriate “papier commun.” Baudelaire’s early introduction of “vélin” raises the reader’s suspicions too soon, and speeds up the time of the narrative at a point where such tension is not required. This increase of tension may in turn have contributed to the effect of “mysteriousness” in Baudelaire’s translation, which was alluded to above.

Such mistranslations, of which other examples can be found (see, for instance, Baudelaire’s description of how Legrand “faisait tourner autour de lui” the beetle attached to a piece of string, where the English text featured “twirling it to and fro” (Mabbott 1978: 817, line 356; Le Dantec 1951: 73, line 450), smack of either a lack of effort or a lack of understanding, or both, on Baudelaire’s part. Moreover, a translator who translates “upon the whole” as “par dessous tout,” (Mabbott 1978: 822, line 561; Le Dantec 1951: 81, line 709), or “beeline” as “ligne d’abeille” (Mabbott 1978: 839, line 1150; Le Dantec 1951: 99, line 1560), is clearly going too far in his commitment to a literal translation strategy, and produces phrases that do not exist in French. All this shows, then, that Baudelaire, at first glance, “wrote foreign,” but that this is the result of the type of “poor” literalism discussed in Chapter Two, which is produced, simply, by a word-for-word rendering of the original. Moreover, remembering the additions which Baudelaire made and which subtly changed the scenery and atmosphere of the story, and remembering his monotonous denotation of the gold bug, the literal strategy is contradicted in more than one way, and can certainly not be said to be carried out consistently throughout the translation.

8.8.3. Question Three

Neither Baudelaire's translation nor Pichot's translation contain, on the whole, textual zones that stand out for their stylistic beauty. Pichot's fluent strategy produces a translation that obviously reads more fluently than Baudelaire's literal translation, which gives a sometimes incongruent and unidiomatic text, and his translation on the whole manages to come into its own thanks to his reproduction of Jupiter's sociolectal difference and of the varying denotations for the gold bug. Baudelaire's translation, on the other hand, contains a series of textual zones where the translation fails completely. These are the zones that feature instances of misunderstanding between the characters, which in Baudelaire's translation become passages that are unexplained by sociolectal differences, and where both narrative and textual cohesion are completely lacking.

8.8.4. Question Four

In order to answer this question, the inverse direction of Chapter Seven, where aspects of Baudelaire's position, project, stance and horizon were put forward to explain the differences observed in the translation, will this time be taken. Reversing the exercise means that the divergences which were observed in the translations will be taken up one by one in order to determine what they reveal us about the translators' position, etc. The incitation to reverse the order of the exercise comes from Berman himself, who indicated that no pre-established order or precedence is necessary to match the "theory of the translating subject" with the textual analyses.

Concerning the first question asked at the beginning of this chapter, namely how the role of the gold bug is reproduced in the respective translations, one can begin by stating that, if Ricardou read symbolism in "Le scarabée d'or," this does not necessarily mean that Baudelaire intended there to be any. As was indicated in the section on the para-texts that accompanied the two translations, nothing in Baudelaire's preface shows that *he* had found Ricardou's symbolic chains in

Poe's text. Still, the monotonous translation of the words "bug," "beetle" and "*scarabæus*" by "scarabée" indicates that Baudelaire was either unaware, or uninterested in reproducing the function of the bug as he had found it in Poe's text, i.e. as a "red herring" or a distraction. On a more general level, though the scope of this study does not allow entering into the details of this observation, Baudelaire's treatment of the tales of ratiocination is often more hasty and less profound than his translation of the other stories. This can be imputed to the fact that Baudelaire's whole project contained little enthusiasm for the analytical and rational side of Poe – as was amply illustrated in Chapter Five. Though he considered Poe to be a clever "jongleur" (Le Dantec 1951 [1857]: 1050), Baudelaire went to great lengths to identify Poe with the debauched or degenerate characters in his fiction, and though he admired Poe's philosophical prowess, the workings of logic and cold reason were not his favourite themes in Poe. The pervasiveness of rational reasoning and speaking in "The Gold Bug," unaccompanied by the Parisian smoke-filled boudoir atmosphere in which the Dupin detective stories bathe, would therefore not have corresponded to what Baudelaire liked to read in Poe.

The reader may also remember the literary horizon in which "The Gold Bug" arrived, which meant, as was explained in Chapter Five, that tales of ratiocination such as "The Gold Bug" and the Dupin trilogy did not yet exist in French literature. Baudelaire therefore had no examples to show him how to analyse multi-layered texts such as "The Gold Bug." Moreover, this absence of similar narratives in the target literature worked to set the translators free in their decisions, since no expectations whatsoever existed with regards to the stylistic effects and textual devices used in these tales of ratiocination.

There are certain aspects of Pichot's position, however, which may explain why he apparently understood the importance of retaining the variation in the denotation of the object of the beetle; or, in other words, why he had a better grasp of the logical structure that supports the narrative. As was indicated at the beginning of this chapter, Pichot was good friends with E.D. Forgues, whom he

escorted on one of his England trips, and the same Forgues published his own piece of pre-Baudelairean para-text, in which he strongly underlined Poe's capacity for weaving multi-layered texts in which logical deduction is the key to the mystery, and in which the degenerate picture of Poe is not yet present. Here is another citation from Forgues' essay, already quoted in Chapter Five, in which Forgues focused strongly on the logical and analytical qualities of Poe's fiction, even when discussing the more morbid and sensational stories:

[Au contraire,] dans les récits originaux que nous voudrions faire connaître, et qui nous arrivent de New York par le dernier *packet-boat*, la logique est à nu; elle domine tout, elle est reine et maîtresse. Son office n'est plus d'étayer, charpente inaperçue, un monument aux riches dehors; elle est elle-même ce monument, qui n'emprunte rien ou presque rien aux autres ressources de l'art. Elle ne joue pas le rôle d'esclave soumis qui prête son épaule robuste à son maître chancelant sous le vin et le conduit, non sans peine, à quelque porte mal entrevue; elle marche seule, forte de sa propre force; elle est le but et le moyen, elle est la cause et l'effet. (Forgues 1974 [1846]: 266)

This was how Forgues had described Poe from the beginning, long before Baudelaire's essays came to change the French picture of Poe, and considering that Pichot and Forgues were colleagues and friends, and considering, moreover, Pichot's own literary preferences, it is safe to state that Pichot was in a good position to fully understand and correctly interpret Poe's analytical texts, and prepared to distinguish their "effets de style" (Forgues 1974 [1846]: 265). Moreover, Pichot here deploys a moderated fluency strategy for his translations of Poe, and does not push fluency to the extreme of leaving out, as Baudelaire did, the variation which the denotations of the object of the beetle need in order to maintain its function of decoy.

Regarding the second question, namely what the translators' respective treatments of the differences in language use say about their translation project and stance, the following conclusions can be drawn: Baudelaire's note on the translation of Jupiter's sociolect clearly indicates that he did not grasp the structural importance of Jupiter's sociolectal difference, and, therefore, that he did not understand that this difference was a central theme in the story. Again, this lack of understanding

should be imputed both to a lack of interest in the analytical side of Poe, and to that part of Baudelaire's project which consisted in appropriating Poe, and "adapting" him, whenever he so desired, to his personal literary tastes. As was indicated during the discussion of Baudelaire's note, not translating Jupiter's sociolectal difference because he thinks it is a "moyen physique" which already exists in the target literature, is part of Baudelaire's project of controlling Poe's reception in France, and of pre-determining the genre or field of literature under which he wanted Poe to be categorized. Baudelaire's own literary preferences thus led him to ignore the logical and analytical qualities of the tale of ratiocination that is "The Gold Bug" and prompted him to focus, as his comments in his preface also show, on the few sensational aspects of the story, i.e. the finding of the treasure and the enumeration of its contents.

Again, Pichot's understanding of Poe's story and of the importance of the sociolects in the narrative structure, can be explained by his greater respect for the logical and analytical side of Poe. Considering that Pichot was not interested in a personal appropriation of Poe, there was no need for him to isolate Poe's work either from its American background, nor from the target literature. Moreover, as Pichot's stance characteristically produced fluent translations, his drive for fluency may have also made him realise that not reproducing the sociolectal differences would result in an incoherent (and thus not very fluent) translation. Still, the most likely reasons for Pichot's maintaining Jupiter's sociolectal difference were both his desire to stay as close to the stylistic effects as possible, and his grasp of the central theme of the text. This, indeed, is borne out by his translations of the misfired speech acts, where Pichot translates the sociolectal differences, but leaves out the elements that create incoherence.

Lastly, the differences in scenery and atmosphere which were observed in Baudelaire's text can be explained by Baudelaire's fascination with the *bousingots* and with a type of literary prose that specialised in sinister atmospheres and menacing surroundings. Quinn's comments on Baudelaire's additions are the plainest proof possible of the fact that this story was too dry, too un-dramatic and

too rational for Baudelaire, and the addition of a few words which charge the atmosphere with gloom is wholly consistent with Baudelaire's entire project for the *translatio* of Poe. Baudelaire thus turned a multi-layered tale of ratiocination into a single-layered story which can be taken to suggest, through a symbolic interpretation, that something mysterious or menacing is going on. He did so by adding a few elements to the atmosphere, and by annulling, through his treatment of the sociolectal differences and his homogenous translation of the denotations of the gold bug, the possibility of reading the story as a self-referential text where misfired speech acts and sociolectal differences illustrate people's differing capacity to decode a ciphered message.

General Conclusion: The Baudelaire Translations as Historic Translations

Before tackling the main issues which this conclusion brings together, some of Berman's statements on "grandes traductions," and his ranking of Baudelaire's translations among that group will be taken up first. The aim is not to adjudicate on the issue, but to match Berman's unconditional praise with the terms by which he qualifies great translations. Firstly, the analyses in Chapters Seven and Eight have just revealed that these texts are not characterised by "une extrême systématique, au moins égale à celle de l'original" (Berman 1990: 2-3). To Berman's second question, whether these translations are a "lieu d'une rencontre entre la langue de l'original et celle du traducteur" (Berman 1990: 2), the answer can be given that Baudelaire introduced new and unidiomatic words and phrases into French, and that his word-for-word rendering sometimes produces French that sounds like translated English, which creates more a "lieu de friction" than a "lieu de rencontre." Thirdly, a great translation supposedly establishes "un lien intense avec l'original, qui se mesure à l'impacte que celui-ci a sur la culture réceptrice," and although nobody denies the important connections existing between Poe and French literature, it must be noted that the great figures of French literature, such as Mallarmé and Valéry, who followed Baudelaire in claiming Poe's ascendancy, read Poe in English (see Weightman 1987: 210-212). It is therefore not necessarily the translations, but Baudelaire's meta-textual treatment of Poe that triggered (and to a large extent sustains) the relationship which French literature entertains with Poe. Fourth, a great translation "constitue pour l'activité de traduction contemporaine ou ultérieure un précédent incontournable" (Berman 1990: 3), and this, as the discussion on the translational horizon revealed, was not the case for Baudelaire's translations. Lastly, Berman says, "ce sont toutes des retraductions" (ibid.), which does apply to Baudelaire's translations. Of the five characteristics which Berman attributed to great translations, then, the translations studied in Chapter Seven and Eight possess

three at most, and besides revealing the difficult applicability of Berman's notion, his unconditional inclusion of the Baudelaire translations among the world's historic translations shows that the strength of their prestige has often formed an impediment to the objective analysis, even by an experienced translation critic, of their qualities.

Moreover, the ambiguities that arise when one tries to apply a category such as *kairos*, the "opportune moment" (for a translation to occur), or *Kairos*, the "ideal" translator, now also become more obvious. Valéry's description of the exhausted state of French literature showed that there was certainly *kairos* for new foreign literature to be translated into French, and we know that introducing "exotic" authors into the home literature was a fashionable strategy to increase one's own literary status. The general interest that had already been raised by the other Poe translators confirms that there was an increasing enthusiasm for Poe's work, and Barbey d'Aurevilly's reaction shows that the French were anticipating Baudelaire's translations in particular. Indeed, as was demonstrated in Chapter Five, thanks to his 1852 essay Baudelaire had created his own opportunity to become Poe's "ideal" translator in a number of ways, and had propelled himself as the Poe specialist of his time. If Baudelaire was the *Kairos* for the translation of Poe's short fiction, this should thus mainly be imputed to the fact that he put himself in that position and created his own opportunity. In this sense, being a *Kairos* has little to do with the quality of one's work as a translator, and the ambiguous nature of idealising categories like *kairos* (and *Kairos*) is thus also revealed.

Kairos and great translations, however, were no longer Berman's concern in his *Pour une critique des traductions*, and Berman's method in Translation Criticism has certainly proven its great value to describe, not historic, but historical translations. Following Berman, this thesis set out to describe the whole process of the *translatio* of Poe's short fiction, with the aim to uncover and explain the motives behind the translator's decisions. Berman's framework of position, stance, project and horizon(s), little-known in the field of Anglophone Translation

Studies, proved to be an extremely valuable tool for that purpose. It required the present author to reveal and establish a number of data about these translations which were not commonly known or accepted in the field of Poe studies, where a detailed analysis of the translation of Poe into French, grounded in contemporary translation theory, was sorely lacking. The main conclusions that were brought forward in this study regarding the conditions of *translatio* of Poe's work into French literature can now be stated as facts, uncovered by the pre-analytical enquiries and by the textual analyses. What has transpired is that Baudelaire's *position* as a poet and active member of the target literature engendered personal preferences both for a particular prose genre (i.e. gothic instead of fantastic literature) and for certain literary characters (the dandy, the *bousingot*, the *poète maudit*) which he also found in Poe's fiction, which he projected onto Poe's person, and which he accentuated in his translations - though this identification did not coincide with a greater understanding of the stylistic and structural intricacies of Poe's texts. This process was not just a result of Baudelaire's position, but of his general *stance* which dictated that a translator should have a personal bond with his author, a bond which Baudelaire cultivated strongly. The translational *horizon* in Baudelaire's time also fully licensed the procedure of increasing one's own literary status by rewriting new foreign literature under one's own name (with or without acknowledging one's source). Most importantly, Baudelaire had a specific and highly paradoxical *project* for the *translatio* of Poe in France, which aimed for, and to a very large extent succeeded in, a complete appropriation of Poe's persona, writings and ideas. If, as a part of this project, Baudelaire had claimed a desire to retain Poe's philosophical "technie" by translating him as literally as possible, even at the cost of writing shaky French, the analyses in Chapters Seven and Eight have shown that the translations do not always correspond to what characterizes the "technie" of the original and that the announced literal strategy is deployed in a pervasive but highly inconsistent manner, and was changed wherever the project of personal appropriation required it. This entails that characteristics were added to stories which somehow served to align them with Baudelaire's own literary preferences. This thesis therefore contributes to the field of Poe studies the finding that Baudelaire's project for the

translations did not give Poe to France, but, rather logically, gave to France what Baudelaire had made of Poe, in a translation that is strongly affected by Baudelaire's personal literary tastes and intentions, and by the distorted image he portrayed of Poe. Together with their para-texts, the translations in themselves thus help to perpetuate myths that are now over 150 years old.

As far as its importance for the discipline of Translation Studies is concerned, the critique carried out in this study will be of interest to literary translators and translation scholars alike, because it constitutes a demonstration of the kind of rewriting that Translation Criticism can produce. The benefit of the pre-analytical framework of facts about the translator's position, stance, project and horizon(s) is borne out by its relevance when describing the translations in themselves, as the analyses brought up a number of symptoms or reflections of this pre-analytical framework which could then be connected to their most likely sources, and vice versa. In other words, the pre-analytical enquiries into the "translating subject" form a framework which can certainly not be accused of being probabilistic, and which constitutes the tool with which to explain the crucial decisions observed in a translation. Berman's Translation Criticism thus includes description and evaluation, but also allows the critic to move beyond those two activities, and explain the grounds or motives for a translator's decisions, thereby contextualising his strategies of rewriting. This makes Berman's method an invaluable tool for the assessment of translation products, unique because of its completeness and its applicability, not only to historical translations, but to any type of translation product.

Another innovative addition to the field of Translation Studies is the expansion, carried out for the first time in the present study, of Berman's guiding principles into "Para-Textual Translation Criticism", an expansion licensed by the philosophical foundations of Berman's proposals. Indeed, cases such as the Baudelaire translations, which are accompanied by an important amount of influential para-text, require a method that includes, as Beretti puts it "tout un ensemble de démarches situés en amont de la traduction ou autour d'elle"

(Berretti 1995: 72), because, as Beretti also claims, these para-texts are often the *locus* of the shaping of readers' opinions on the original author and his writings. Moreover, concerning the case of the Baudelaire translations specifically, the comparison with other para-texts such as E.D. Forgues' preface further revealed the very personal and idiosyncratic interpretation that Baudelaire gave to Poe's work, and the para-texts which contained the proof of Baudelaire's plagiarism of Poe's ideas on literary composition also eloquently illustrated the translator's approach to his author's work. "Para-Textual Translation Criticism" has thus also proven its usefulness, and can now be adopted by Translation Studies, with the understanding that the contents of the para-texts surrounding certain translations are an inseparable part of the object of analysis, and with the implication (in the term "Criticism") that every rewriting is context-specific, and that all the factors that constituted the context (in its largest sense) of the rewriting should therefore be described, and wherever possible, retraced in the translations.

From this para-textual critique of his work, a new picture of Baudelaire's rewriting of Poe and of the *translatio* and canonisation of Poe's work in French literature has thus emerged. Having sound translation theory as a starting point, and relying on a basis of solid data about the translator and his intentions, this thesis disperses some of the myths that surround the Baudelaire/Poe relationship and the Baudelaire translations, which, because of the prestige of their author, have never been approached in such a critical manner before. One indeed needs to have gathered a large arsenal of information before making any statements that might be seen to detract from Baudelaire's prestige, and Berman's method required the present author to do just that. This thesis will therefore be of interest to those Poe scholars who continue to be puzzled by the question of what the French see in Poe, and why he became such an important part of the French literary canon. What has been revealed is that without Baudelaire's stamp on Poe's image, the latter would very likely never have become the degenerate alcoholic and accidental genius which many French readers continue to see in him, and while his work is now mainly remembered for its horror and psychological turmoil, its analytical and logical strength, which now fascinates its

Anglophone readers, may become better appraised in France. What now survives of Poe there is affected by Baudelaire's personal and idiosyncratic interpretation of the man and his work, and strengthened by a flux of readings which all have Baudelaire's as a starting point. Had Poe been introduced simply by virtue of his writings, the focus could have stayed on the work in itself, and a whole school of French Poe interpretation would simply not have existed. Those scholars who believe that this picture is obsolete, and that Richard's 1989 edition proves that Poe has now been "given back" to Poe, should know that in France, up until today, Poe is still mainly read in translation (i.e. in Baudelaire's translation), and that very recent French academic work on Poe's fiction, such as Joguín's 2002 *Itinéraire initiatique d'Edgar Poe*, still refer to Baudelaire's translations as if they were Poe's source texts. It is clear, then, that though Richard did manage to separate Poe from Baudelaire to some extent, the impact of Baudelaire's project of appropriation *on the translations* thus continues to be largely ignored.

Lastly, the findings of this study can be carried forward by taking Berman's Translation Criticism into its positive stage, because they reveal, through profound and complete analysis, the possible necessity, or at least the necessary conditions for the re-translation of an existing translation. Indeed, the question which post-structuralism asks of a translation, and the "task" which Benjamin sees for a translator, concern the manner in which a translation helps a work of literature to "live on", which implies that the purpose of a translation and of any rewriting is to "keep the fire going", by unveiling the necessity and conditions for retranslation and rewriting. What can be concluded is that the first condition to retranslate Poe into French would be to separate Poe's short fiction from the image that was created for its author, and from the para-text that engendered this image, or, in the words used in the first chapter, to separate Poe from the factors by which Baudelaire unilaterally "cannibalised" him. In this manner, a new rewriting may arrive at a more productive form of cannibalism, which, instead of merely strengthening the rewriter, also reinforces the one being rewritten. Richard's 1989 edition of Poe's œuvre in French goes some way in that direction, but the fact that Richard did not retranslate a single story of those which

Baudelaire had translated, clearly indicates that even specialists are wary of touching what has apparently become Baudelaire's property. The prestige of these translations, enhanced by Baudelaire's contemporary prestige as a poet, and by the fascination which the story of resemblance between Baudelaire and Poe continues to arouse, has thus made these translations untouchable and un-criticisable, in other words, un-rewritable. The French Poe finds himself imprisoned in a stage of rewriting which by virtue of its own prestige prevents other stages to succeed it – and this may be a more realistic definition of what makes an historic (i.e. "great") translation. Still, considering the renewed interest and the contemporary readings which Poe now undergoes in his home country (as found, for instance, in Rachman & Rosenheim 1995), today the un-rewritable status of the Baudelaire translations constitutes a stage where the French Poe is doomed to stagnate, since no such re-readings are being done in France. Hopefully this study has shown, through detailed description and analysis of the how and why of these translations, that the first condition to ensure Poe's survival in France, will be to separate his fate from that of Baudelaire's, and that the first and most efficient step in that direction, may very well be a new (re)translation.

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Appendix A:

Baudelaire's Translations Published in the Magazine Press

Source: Richard 1989: 1584-1586.

Note: the abbreviations *HE*, *NHE* and *HGS* stand for the collection in which the translation was later republished (respectively *Histoires extraordinaires* (1856), *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires* (1857) and *Histoires grotesques et sérieuses* (1865)). The translations are ranked in chronological order of first publication.

“Révélation magnétique.” In *La liberté de penser*, 15 July 1848 and in *Le pays*, 30 July 1854. (*HE*).

“Bérénice.” In *L'Illustration*, 17 April 1852 and in *Le pays*, 2 August 1854. (*NHE*).

“Le puits et le pendule.” In *La revue de Paris*, October 1852 and in *Le pays*, 3 and 4 August 1854. (*NHE*).

“Philosophie de l'ameublement.” In *Le magazine des familles*, October 1852; in *Le monde littéraire*, 27 March 1853 and in *Le pays*, 14 September 1854. (*HGS*).

“Une aventure dans les Montagnes Rocheuses.” In *L'Illustration*, 11 December 1852 and in *Le pays*, 25 and 26 July 1854 with new title “Les souvenirs de M.A. Bedloe.” (*NHE*).

“Le cœur révélateur.” In *Paris-journal*, 4 February 1853 and in *Le pays*, 29 July 1854 with new title “Le plaidoyer d'un fou.” (*NHE*).

“Le corbeau.” In *L'Artiste*, 1 March 1853; in *Le pays*, 29 July 1854 and in *Revue française*, 20 April 1859 with new title “La genèse d'un poème.” (*HGS*).

“Le chat noir.” In *Paris*, 13 and 14 November 1853 and in *Le pays*, 31 July and 1 August 1854. (NHE).

“Morella.” In *Paris*, 14 and 15 November 1853 and in *Le pays*, 18 September 1854. (NHE).

“Entretien d’Eiros avec Charmion.” In *Le pays*, 27 July 1854. (NHE with new title “Conversation d’Eiros avec Charmion”).

“L’homme-caméléopard ou Quatre bêtes en une.” In *Le pays*, 28 July 1854. (NHE with new title “Quatre bêtes en une”).

“Puissance de la parole.” In *Le pays*, 5 August 1854. (NHE).

“L’Ombre.” In *Le pays*, 5 August 1854. (NHE, with new title “Ombre”).

“La barrique d’Amontillado.” In *Le pays*, 13 September 1854. (NHE).

“Le démon de la perversité.” In *Le pays*, 14 September 1854. (NHE).

“Metzengerstein.” In *Le pays*, 17 September 1854. (NHE).

“Le diable dans le beffroi.” In *Le pays*, 20 September 1854. (NHE).

“Mort ou vivant? Cas de M. Valdemar.” In *Le pays*, 20 and 26 September 1854 and in *Le Figaro*, 10 April 1856 with new title “La vérité sur le cas de M. Valdemar.” (HE).

“Petite discussion avec une momie.” In *Le pays*, 11 and 12 December 1854. (NHE).

“Manuscrit trouvé dans une bouteille.” In *Le pays*, 21 and 22 January 1855. (HE).

“Le colloque de Monos et Una.” In *Le pays*, 23 January 1855. (NHE with new title “Colloque entre Monos et Una.”)

“Le roi peste.” In *Le pays*, 23, 26 and 27 January 1855. (NHE).

“L’homme des foules.” In *Le pays*, 27 and 28 January 1855. (NHE).

“Le portrait ovale.” In *Le pays*, 28 January 1855. (NHE).

“L’Île de la fée.” In *Le pays*, 28 and 30 January 1855. (NHE).

“Le canard au ballon.” In *Le pays*, 31 January, 2 and 3 February 1855. (HE).

“Ligeia.” In *Le pays*, 3 and 4 February 1855. (HE).

“Une descente dans le Maelström.” In *Le pays*, 5, 6 and 7 February 1855. (HE).

“La chute de la maison Usher.” In *Le pays*, 7, 9 and 13 February 1855. (NHE).

“William Wilson.” In *Le pays*, 14, 15, 18 and 19 February 1855. (NHE).

“Être un lion, conte moral.” In *Le pays*, 19 and 22 February 1855. (NHE with new title “Lionnerie”).

“Le silence.” In *Le pays*, 22 February 1855. (NHE with new title “Silence”).

“Le masque de la mort rouge.” In *Le pays*, 22 and 23 February 1855. (NHE).

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Appendix B: Amédée Pichot's "Le scarabée d'or"

Amédée Pichot. 1853. *Nouvelles Choiesies d'Edgard Poë*. Paris: Librairie L. Hachette et Cie. pp. 3-69.

LE SCARABÉE D'OR

Il y a quelques années que je fis la connaissance d'un M. William Legrand, descendant d'une ancienne famille de protestants français établie à la Nouvelle-Orléans, et nos rapports ne tardèrent pas à s'établir sur un pied d'intimité. Possesseur d'une belle fortune, Legrand s'était vu ruiné par une série de malheurs : il quitta la ville qu'avaient habitée ses ancêtres et alla s'installer à Sullivan's Island, près de Charleston, dans la Caroline du sud.

Cette île, qui n'est guère qu'un amas de sable marin, a environ trois milles de longueur, et nulle part sa largeur n'excède un quart de mille. Elle est séparée du continent par un filet d'eau à peine visible, qui se fraye un passage à travers un lit de vase et de joncs, espèce de canal marécageux fréquenté par les poules d'eau. La végétation, ainsi qu'on peut le supposer, y est, rare, ou du moins n'y atteint que des proportions très-médiocres. On n'y voit point de grands arbres. Le palmier nain y croît, à la vérité, vers l'extrémité occidentale, où s'élève le fort Moultrie. Non loin de là, quelques chétives habitations sont occupées pendant l'été par d'honnêtes citadins, qui abandonnent alors Charleston aux fièvres et à la poussière; mais, à l'exception de cette pointe occidentale, et de la grève formée d'une substance calcaire, qui s'étend, comme une lisière blanchâtre, du côté de la mer, l'île entière offre l'aspect d'un grand buisson de myrtes : ces arbrisseaux y atteignent souvent une hauteur de quinze à vingt pieds, et forment un fourré verdoyant qui parfume l'air de ses exhalaisons embaumées.

C'est dans la partie la plus épaisse et la plus retirée de ce bocage, non loin de l'extrémité orientale de l'île, que Legrand s'était construit une petite case, qu'il habitait lorsque notre rencontre accidentelle fut, comme je l'ai dit plus haut, le prélude des relations amicales qui s'établirent bientôt entre nous. Je trouvai en lui un homme instruit, doué d'une rare intelligence, mais enclin à la misanthropie et sujet à des accès alternatifs d'enthousiasme et d'humeur noire. Il avait beaucoup de livres et lisait peu : ses principaux amusements consistaient à tirer des oiseaux et à pêcher, ou bien à flâner sur le rivage et parmi les myrtes, à la recherche de coquillages et surtout d'insectes ; il était ainsi parvenu à se former une collection entomologique qu'un Swammerdam eût enviée. Il était ordinairement accompagné dans ces perambulations par un vieux nègre appelé Jupiter, affranchi dans le temps de sa prospérité, mais qui n'avait jamais voulu renoncer à ce qu'il considérait comme son droit de suivre partout son jeune « massa W'ill. » Il est assez probable que la famille de Legrand, supposant son cerveau un peu dérangé, avait encouragé sous main ces dispositions du vieux Jupiter, afin qu'il servit de surveillant et en quelque sorte de gardien à son excentrique maître.

L'hiver n'est jamais bien rude sous la latitude de Sullivan's Island, et il est rare qu'on éprouve le besoin d'y faire du feu avant la fin de l'année. Il y eut cependant, vers le milieu du mois d'octobre 18.., une journée d'un froid très-vif. Le soleil était sur le point de se coucher, lorsque je traversai, non sans quelque difficulté, cette forêt de myrtes qui protégeait l'humble retraite de mon ami : j'habitais alors Charleston, éloigné de neuf milles de l'île, et les moyens de communication n'étaient pas, à beaucoup près, aussi nombreux à cette époque qu'ils le sont aujourd'hui. Arrivé à l'ermitage, je frappai, selon mon habitude; personne ne m'ayant répondu, je cherchai la clef à l'endroit où je savais qu'on la cachait, j'ouvris la porte et j'entrai. Un bon feu brillait au foyer: c'était une nouveauté, et une nouveauté qui ne pouvait m'être qu'agréable. Je me débarrassai de mon surtout, je tirai un fauteuil auprès des bûches pétillantes, et m'étant commodément installé, j'attendis patiemment le retour de mon hôte.

Il faisait déjà nuit lorsque Legrand et Jupiter arrivèrent. Ma visite parut leur procurer une douce surprise, et leur accueil fut plein de cordialité. Jupiter, manifestant sa joie par une espèce de grimace qui dilatait sa bouche d'une oreille à l'autre, se mit en devoir de préparer quelques poules d'eau pour notre souper. Legrand était dans un de ses accès, quel autre nom pourrais-je leur donner? d'enthousiasme. Il avait trouvé un bivalve inconnu, formant un nouveau genre, et, ce qui était encore plus important à ses yeux, il avait découvert et capturé, avec l'assistance de Jupiter, un scarabée qu'il croyait aussi être entièrement nouveau, mais sur lequel il désirait avoir mon opinion le lendemain.

« Et pourquoi pas ce soir? demandai-je en me frottant les mains devant la flamme, et donnant mentalement au diable toute la race des scarabées.

- Ah! s'écria Legrand, si j'avais su que vous étiez ici! Mais il y a si longtemps qu'on ne vous a vu ; et comment pouvais-je deviner que vous vous mettriez en route par un froid pareil, pour venir me rendre visite? Le fait est que j'ai rencontré, en revenant ici, le lieutenant G..., et que j'ai fait la sottise de lui prêter l'insecte, qu'il a porté au fort; impossible donc de le voir avant demain matin. Mais restez ce soir avec nous, et j'enverrai Jupiter le chercher au lever du soleil. C'est la chose la plus merveilleuse que vous ayez jamais vue.

- Quoi? le lever du soleil?

- Eh non! l'insecte! Figurez-vous une créature de la grosseur d'une noix d'*hickory*⁵⁶ un corsage d'un magnifique jaune doré, avec deux taches d'un noir de jais, près d'une des extrémités du dos, et une autre un peu plus longue, à l'extrémité opposée; les antennes....

- Et moi répéter à vous, massa Will, interrompit ici Jupiter, *carabé* être d'or, d'or massif, dedans et tout, excepté ailes; moi n'avoir jamais vu de ma vie *carabé* lourd comme ça.

⁵⁶ Espèce de noyer d'Amérique, d'un bois très-dur

- Eh bien! en supposant que cela soit, répliqua Legrand qui paraissait prendre la chose un peu plus sérieusement qu'elle ne le méritait, est-ce une raison pour laisser brûler notre souper? La couleur de cet insecte, poursuivit-il en se tournant vers moi, suffirait presque pour justifier l'idée de Jupiter : on ne saurait imaginer de reflets métalliques plus brillants que ceux de ses élytres. Mais vous ne pourrez en juger que demain; en attendant, je vais toujours vous donner une idée de sa forme.» A ces mots, il s'assit devant une petite table, sur laquelle étaient une plume et une écritoire, mais pas de papier. Il en chercha dans un tiroir de la table, et n'en trouva point.

« C'est égal, dit-il, voici qui fera l'affaire; » et tirant de la poche de son gilet quelque chose qui me parut être un morceau de papier commun fort sale, il y traça avec la plume un croquis de son insecte. Pendant ce temps, je ne quittai pas ma place auprès du feu, car je n'étais pas encore complètement réchauffé. Quand mon ami eut fini, il me passa son dessin, sans se lever. Au moment même où je le recevais de sa main, une espèce de hurlement plaintif, suivi d'un grattement à la porte, se fit entendre au dehors. Jupiter alla ouvrir, et un gros chien de Terre-Neuve, qui appartenait à Legrand, se précipita dans la chaumière, et bondissant sur moi avec une impétuosité qui faillit me renverser, m'accabla de caresses : nous étions de vieilles connaissances. Ce fut seulement après ce petit incident que je regardai le papier que m'avait donné Legrand, et, à vrai dire, je me trouvai assez embarrassé.

« Voilà, dis-je après l'avoir examiné, voilà, il faut en convenir, un animal extraordinaire et tout à fait nouveau pour moi. Je n'ai encore rien vu, jusqu'à ce jour, qui ressemble à cela, à moins que ce ne soit une tête de mort.

- Une tête de mort! répéta Legrand; en effet, vous avez peut-être raison; il a quelque chose de cela sur le papier. Les deux taches supérieures figurent les yeux, n'est-ce pas? et la tache allongée qui se trouve plus bas peut passer pour la bouche; et puis la forme de l'ensemble est ovale.

- C'est peut-être cela, répondis-je; mais, après tout, je crains, Legrand, que vous ne soyez pas artiste. J'attendrai donc, avec votre permission, pour me faire une idée exacte de votre insecte, que je l'aie vu en personne.

- Je ne sais comment cela se fait, reprit Legrand un peu piqué; mais je crois pourtant dessiner passablement; du moins je le *devrais*, car j'ai eu de bons maîtres, et je ne suis pas tout à fait maladroit.

- Alors, mon cher ami, lui dis-je, vous vous amusez à mes dépens. C'est bien là une tête de mort, je dirai même une tête de mort fort bien faite, d'après toutes les idées reçues en pareille matière; et si votre scarabée ressemble à cela, c'est incontestablement l'animal le plus curieux qu'il y ait au monde. Nous pourrions même fabriquer là-dessus quelque légende bien effroyable. Je présume que vous lui donnerez le nom de *scarabeus caput hominis*, ou quelque chose d'analogue. On trouve dans les livres d'histoire naturelle beaucoup de dénominations semblables. Mais où sont donc ces antennes dont vous parliez?

- Les antennes! s'écria Legrand que cette petite discussion paraissait animer singulièrement. Parbleu! vous devez les voir, les antennes! je les ai faites aussi distinctes qu'elles le sont dans l'insecte même, et je pense que cela doit suffire.

- C'est possible, lui dis-je; mais ce qu'il y a de certain, c'est que je ne les vois pas. » Et ne jugeant pas à propos de pousser les choses plus loin, je lui rendis son papier sans autre observation. J'étais surpris, je l'avoue, de la tournure qu'avait prise la conversation; je ne comprenais pas la susceptibilité de mon ami. Quant au dessin de l'insecte, il était bien positif qu'on n'y voyait aucune trace d'antennes, et que le tout ressemblait à l'image ordinaire d'une tête de mort.

Legrand prit le papier de fort mauvaise grâce, et il se disposait à le froisser dans sa main pour le jeter au feu, lorsque ses yeux étant tombés par hasard sur le dessin, il parut tout à coup en proie à quelque puissante

émotion : son visage se colora d'une vive rougeur, puis redevint presque aussitôt d'une pâleur mortelle. Il continua pendant quelque temps d'examiner le dessin avec la plus grande attention. Enfin il se leva, prit une chandelle sur la table, et alla s'asseoir sur un coffre, à l'autre bout de la chambre : là, il se livra de nouveau à une investigation minutieuse du papier, qu'il tourna dans tous les sens sans proférer un mot. Cette conduite bizarre m'étonnait beaucoup ; je crus néanmoins devoir m'abstenir de tout commentaire, pour ne pas exciter encore une humeur irritable. Mon ami, ayant apparemment achevé son examen, tira de la poche de son habit un portefeuille, y déposa soigneusement le papier, et serra le tout dans un pupitre, qu'il ferma à clef. Cela fait, il parut plus calme; mais l'enthousiasme qu'il avait naguère manifesté au sujet de son scarabée avait entièrement disparu. A mesure que la soirée s'avancait, il devenait de plus en plus rêveur, et je fis de vains efforts pour l'arracher à ses distractions continuelles. Je m'étais proposé de passer la nuit dans son ermitage, comme je l'avais fait plus d'une fois auparavant; mais le voyant si absorbé, je me décidai à me retirer. Il ne fit pas d'instances pour me retenir, mais au moment où je prenais congé de lui, il me serra la main avec un redoublement de cordialité.

Près d'un mois s'était écoulé, et je n'avais plus entendu parler de Legrand, lorsque je reçus à Charleston la visite de son vieux serviteur Jupiter. Le bon nègre ne m'avait jamais paru aussi abattu, et la première idée qui me vint en le voyant, c'est qu'il était arrivé quelque malheur à mon ami.

« Eh bien, Jupin! lui dis-je, qu'y a-t-il de nouveau? Comment se porte votre maître?

- Ah! massa, lui pas aussi bien que voudrais moi.

- Pas bien, dites-vous? Je suis vraiment fâché d'apprendre cela. Qu'a-t-il donc?

- Voilà l'affaire, qu'a-t-il? lui jamais se plaindre; mais lui bien malade pourtant!

- Bien malade, Jupiter! que ne me disiez-vous cela tout de suite? Est-ce qu'il serait alité?

-Non, massa, lui pas dans lit : voilà justement la chose! Mais moi très-inquiet au sujet de massa Will.

-Jupiter, expliquez-vous d'une manière plus intelligible. Votre maître est malade; ne vous a-t-il pas dit quelle était sa maladie?

- Bon Dieu! massa, pas mettre vous en colère. Massa Will dit lui avoir rien du tout. Mais alors pourquoi lui aller toujours seul, tout pensif, la tête penchée comme ça? Et puis, lui faire du matin au soir des chiffres et toute sorte de figures extraordinaires sur ardoise. Moi être obligé d'avoir continuellement oeil sur lui. L'autre jour, lui avoir pris la clef des champs avant soleil levé, et être resté dehors jusqu'à la nuit. Moi avoir coupé gros bâton pour donner à lui bonne correction quand lui reviendrait. Mais nègre si bête, pas avoir courage. Massa Will avoir l'air si souffrant!

- A la bonne heure, Jupiter! Il ne faut pas être trop dur avec votre pauvre maître; surtout gardez-vous bien de le battre; il n'est pas en état de supporter de mauvais traitements. Mais quelle peut donc être la cause de cette maladie, ou plutôt de ce changement de conduite? Est-il survenu quelque accident, rien de fâcheux depuis que je vous ai vus?

- Non, massa, rien être arrivé depuis; mais être arrivé avant, moi avoir peur; être arrivé jour même que vous étiez là-bas.

- Comment ! que voulez-vous dire?

- Oui, moi vouloir dire *carabé, là*.

- Quoi?

- *Carabé*, petite bête. Moi être certain massa Will avoir été mordu à la tête par *carabé* d'or.

- Et qu'est-ce qui vous fait supposer cela, Jupiter?

- Parce que moi n'avoir jamais vu *carabé* enragé comme celui-là, massa; lui mordre et égratigner tout ce qui approchait lui. Massa Will attraper lui d'abord, mais lâcher lui bien vite : être alors sans doute que lui avoir été mordu. Moi aimer pas la mine de *carabé*, et vouloir pas prendre lui avec mes doigts, mais attraper lui avec un morceau de papier que moi trouver; moi envelopper lui dans papier, et fourrer aussi morceau de papier dans la bouche à lui : c'est comme ça.

- Ainsi vous croyez que votre maître a été réellement mordu par le scarabée, et que c'est cette morsure qui l'a rendu malade?

- Moi croire rien, moi être sûr. Pourquoi lui rêver tant d'or, sinon parce que *carabé* d'or avoir mordu lui? n'être pas la première fois que moi entendre parler de *carabés* d'or.

- Mais comment savez-vous qu'il rêve d'or?

- Comment moi savoir? parce que lui parler d'or pendant que lui dormir. Etre comme ça que moi savoir.

- Eh bien, Jupin, vous avez peut-être raison. Mais à quelle heureuse circonstance suis-je redevable de votre visite? M. Legrand vous a-t-il chargé de quelque message pour moi?

- Non, massa; moi apporter lettre que voici. » Et il me présenta un billet ainsi conçu :

« Mon cher,

« Pourquoi ne venez-vous plus me voir? Vous seriez-vous formalisé de quelques petites brusqueries dont j'ai pu me rendre coupable? C'est une supposition à laquelle je ne saurais m'arrêter.

« J'ai eu, depuis que je vous ai vu, un grand poids sur l'esprit, un grand sujet d'anxiété. J'ai quelque chose à vous communiquer, mais je ne sais comment m'y prendre, je ne sais même pas si je dois le dire.

« Je suis, depuis quelques jours, légèrement indisposé, et ce pauvre Jupin me tourmente, au delà de toute expression, par ses soins à bonnes intentions. Le croiriez-vous? Il s'était muni l'autre jour d'une espèce de gourdin, avec lequel il ne se proposait rien moins que de m'administrer une petite correction, pour m'être permis de m'échapper et d'aller passer la journée, seul, sur la terre ferme, au milieu des montagnes. Je crois, en vérité, que je ne suis redevable qu'à ma mine de malade d'avoir échappé à la bastonnade.

« Rien de nouveau dans ma collection.

« Si vous pouvez vous arranger de manière à revenir avec Jupin, vous m'obligerez beaucoup. Venez, je vous en prie; je désire vous voir *ce soir même*, pour affaire urgente. Il s'agit, je vous assure, d'une affaire de *la plus haute importance*.

« Tout à vous,

« WILLIAM LEGRAND. »

Ma première impression, en lisant ce billet, fut un sentiment d'inquiétude. Ce n'était pas là le style ordinaire de Legrand. Quelle nouvelle idée lui était passée par la tête? Quelle pouvait être cette affaire de *la plus haute importance*, pour laquelle il réclamait mon concours? Je n'augurais rien de bon de tout ce que m'avait dit Jupiter. Je craignais que des chagrins secrets, se rattachant à ses revers de fortune, n'eussent fini par altérer la raison de mon ami. Il n'y avait

donc pas à hésiter : je me mis immédiatement en devoir d'accompagner le vieux nègre.

En arrivant au quai, je remarquai une faux et trois bêches, toutes neuves en apparence, au fond du bateau dans lequel nous devions nous embarquer

« Que signifie tout cet attirail, Jupin? demandai-je.

- Être faux, massa, et bêches aussi.

- Je le vois bien. Mais pourquoi ces outils sont-ils là?

- Parce que massa Will avoir dit à moi acheter pour lui faux et bêches en ville, et eux avoir coûté à moi terriblement cher.

- Mais, au nom du ciel, qu'est-ce que votre « massa Will » veut faire avec des faux et des bêches?

- Ah! pour cela, lui seul savoir!... Mais tout ça venir de *carabé*. »

Voyant qu'il n'y avait rien à tirer de Jupiter, dont toutes les facultés intellectuelles semblaient être absorbées par son *carabé*, j'entrai dans le bateau, et la voile fut déployée. Favorisés par une bonne brise, nous abordions après une courte navigation dans la petite anse qui se trouve au nord du fort Moultrie et après une demi-heure de marche nous arrivâmes à l'ermitage. Il était environ trois heures de l'après-midi. Legrand nous attendait avec impatience. La vivacité nerveuse avec laquelle il saisit et serra la main que je lui offrais confirma tout d'abord mes soupçons. Il était pâle, excessivement pâle, et ses yeux, enfoncés dans leurs orbites, brillaient d'un étrange éclat. Après quelques questions sur l'état de sa santé, je lui demandai, faute d'un autre sujet de conversation, si le lieutenant G.... lui avait rendu son scarabée.

« Oui, oui, répondit-il en rougissant beaucoup, il me l'a rendu le lendemain matin. Je ne m'en séparerai pas aujourd'hui pour tout au monde. Savez-vous bien, à propos de ce scarabée, que Jupiter avait tout à fait raison?

- En quoi, raison? demandai-je avec un triste pressentiment.

- Eh bien! en supposant que c'était un vrai scarabée d'or. Il prononça ces mots avec un sérieux qui me serra le cœur.

« Ce scarabée, poursuivit-il avec un sourire triomphant, est destiné à faire, ou plutôt à relever ma fortune. Est-il donc étonnant que j'y attache un si grand prix? Il ne s'agit plus pour moi, maintenant, que d'en faire l'usage convenable, et j'arriverai au trésor auquel il doit me conduire. Jupiter, apporte-moi ce scarabée.

- Quoi! *carabé*, massa? Moi aimer mieux avoir rien à faire avec carabé; vous, prendre *carabé* vous-même.» Là-dessus Legrand se leva d'un air grave et majestueux; il prit l'insecte sous un petit globe de verre qui le recouvrait, et me l'apporta. C'était un magnifique scarabée, d'une espèce alors inconnue aux naturalistes, et par conséquent d'une assez grande valeur au point de vue de la science. Il avait deux taches noires circulaires vers l'une des extrémités du dos, et une tache longitudinale à l'autre extrémité; ses élytres, très-dures et lustrées, paraissaient d'or bruni. Le poids de cet insecte était aussi fort remarquable, et à tout prendre, on pouvait concevoir jusqu'à un certain point l'opinion que s'en était faite Jupiter; mais que Legrand affectât d'adopter cette opinion, c'était une chose qui passait tout à fait ma compréhension.

« Je vous ai envoyé chercher, dit-il d'un ton sérieux, lorsque j'eus achevé d'examiner l'insecte, je vous ai envoyé chercher, afin de pouvoir, avec votre assistance et vos conseils réaliser les intentions du destin, dont ce scarabée est....

- Mon cher Legrand, m'écriai-je en l'interrompant, vous êtes certainement indisposé, et vous ferez bien de prendre quelques petites précautions indispensables. Vous allez, pour commencer, vous mettre au lit, et je resterai auprès de vous, quelques jours, s'il le faut, jusqu'à ce que vous soyez complètement rétabli. Vous avez de la fièvre, et....

- Tâtez mon pouls, » dit-il.

Je le tâtai effectivement, et je dois déclarer que le pouls ne manifestait pas le moindre indice de fièvre.

- Mais, repris-je, on peut être malade sans avoir la fièvre. Permettez que je vous fasse une ordonnance. D'abord, vous allez, ainsi que je le disais, vous coucher; ensuite....

- Vous vous trompez, mon ami, dit-il. Je me porte aussi bien que le permet l'état d'excitation morale dans lequel je me trouve en ce moment. Si vous voulez que je me porte tout à fait bien, il n'y a qu'une chose à faire, c'est de soulager cette excitation.

- Et par quel moyen?

- Par un moyen très-simple. Jupiter et moi nous allons partir pour une expédition dans les montagnes, sur la terre ferme, et pour cette expédition nous aurons besoin de l'aide de quelqu'un en qui nous puissions avoir une entière confiance. Ce quelqu'un, c'est vous.

- Je désire faire tout ce qui peut vous être agréable, répliquai-je, mais prétendez-vous dire que ce maudit scarabée ait quelque rapport avec cette expédition que vous projetez?

- Incontestablement.

- En ce cas, je ne vous accompagnerai pas; car tout cela me paraît absurde.

- J'en suis fâché, très-fâché; car nous serons bien obligés d'essayer de nous passer de vous.

- Essayer de se passer de moi! Mais il est fou, décidément! Voyons, Legrand, combien de temps comptez-vous être absent?

- Probablement toute la nuit. Nous allons partir sur-le-champ, et nous serons de retour, dans tous les cas, au lever du soleil.

- Et vous me promettez, sur l'honneur, qu'après que je vous aurai passé ce caprice, et que l'affaire du scarabée (bon Dieu!) sera terminée à votre satisfaction, vous reviendrez ici, et suivrez exactement mes prescriptions, comme vous feriez celles de votre médecin?

- Je vous le promets. Et maintenant en route, car nous n'avons pas de temps à perdre. »

Ce fut avec un sentiment pénible que je me décidai à accompagner mon ami. Nous partîmes vers quatre heures, Legrand, Jupiter, le chien et moi. Jupiter portait la faux et les bûches; il avait insisté pour s'en charger, moins, à ce qu'il me parut, par zèle ou par complaisance, que par crainte de laisser ces dangereux instruments à portée de son maître. Il avait, du reste, l'air de fort mauvaise humeur, et les mots « *damné carabé* » furent les seuls qui lui échappèrent pendant toute la route. J'avais, pour mon compte, deux lanternes sourdes, Legrand s'étant réservé pour sa part le scarabée, qu'il portait attaché au bout d'une petite corde à fouet, et qu'il faisait tourner de côté et d'autre en marchant avec l'air d'un magicien. A la vue de ce dernier et évident symptôme de l'aberration mentale de mon ami, j'eus peine à retenir mes larmes. Cependant, en y réfléchissant, je jugeai que je n'avais rien de mieux à faire qu'à continuer de me prêter à son caprice, jusqu'à ce que je fusse en état de prendre, avec quelque chance de succès, des mesures plus énergiques. Mais j'essayai vainement d'obtenir de lui quelques explications sur l'objet de l'expédition. Une fois assuré de ma

coopération, il parut peu disposé à lier conversation sur ce sujet, et se borna à répondre à toutes mes questions:

« Nous verrons! »

Nous traversâmes dans un batelet le canal qui sépare l'île de la terre ferme, et gravissant les hauteurs du continent, nous avançâmes, dans la direction du nord-ouest, à travers un pays sauvage et désert, où l'on n'apercevait aucun vestige de créatures humaines. Legrand nous guidait d'un pas assuré; de temps à autre seulement, il s'arrêtait un instant pour consulter certains signes de reconnaissance qu'il paraissait avoir tracés ou établis lui-même dans une précédente occasion. Nous marchâmes ainsi pendant deux heures environ, et le soleil se couchait au moment où nous entrions dans une région incomparablement plus désolée que tout ce que nous avions vu jusqu'alors. C'était une sorte de plateau situé vers le sommet d'une montagne presque inaccessible, couverte, de la base à la cime, de bois entremêlés d'immenses quartiers de roche. Ces blocs, épars çà et là, n'étaient souvent soutenus que par les arbres placés immédiatement au-dessous, et sans lesquels ils auraient roulé dans les vallées. Des ravins profonds, sillonnant le sol dans tous les sens, ajoutaient encore à la sublime horreur du paysage.

Le plateau naturel sur lequel nous nous trouvions était tellement hérissé de broussailles, que nous ne tardâmes pas à reconnaître qu'il nous aurait été impossible de nous y frayer un chemin sans le secours de la faux; et Jupiter, sur l'ordre de son maître, se mit à ouvrir un passage jusqu'à un gigantesque tulipier entouré d'un groupe de huit à dix chênes, qu'il surpassait de beaucoup, ainsi que tous les autres arbres des environs, par la richesse de son feuillage, par le développement de ses rameaux et par la majesté générale de ses proportions. Quand nous fumes arrivés au pied de cet arbre, Legrand se tourna vers Jupiter et lui demanda s'il croyait pouvoir y grimper. Cette interpellation inattendue parut étourdir le vieux noir un instant; enfin, il s'approcha de l'énorme tronc et en fit lentement le tour,

l'examinant avec un soin minutieux. Lorsqu'il eut terminé cette inspection, il se contenta de répondre:

« Oui, massa; Jupiter grimper tous les arbres que lui avoir jamais vus.

-En ce cas, tu vas grimper sur celui-ci le plus vite que tu pourras; car il fera bientôt trop nuit pour que nous voyions clair à nos affaires.

-Jusqu'où moi grimper, massa? demanda Jupiter.

-Commence par grimper jusqu'à la naissance des branches, et je te dirai ensuite ce que tu auras à faire. Mais attends, il faut prendre le scarabée avec toi.

-*Carabé*, massa! *carabé* d'or! s'écria le nègre tout déconcerté et faisant un pas en arrière; et pourquoi donc falloir moi monter avec *carabé* dans l'arbre? Diable emporte! moi pas vouloir.

- Si tu as peur, Jupin, grand et fort comme tu l'es, de toucher un petit insecte mort, qui ne peut te faire aucun mal, tu n'as qu'à le tenir au bout de cette ficelle; mais si tu ne le montes pas avec toi, d'une manière ou d'une autre, je serai obligé de te casser la tête avec la bêche que voici.

- Eh bien! quoi donc, quoi donc à présent, massa? dit Jupiter évidemment honteux de sa poltronnerie. Vous toujours chercher querelle à vieux nègre. Moi dire ça pour rire. Moi avoir peur de *carabé*! allons donc!» A ces mots, il prit avec précaution l'extrémité de la ficelle, et tenant l'insecte aussi éloigné de sa personne que les circonstances le permettaient, il se disposa à escalader l'arbre.

Le tulipier (*liriodendron tulipiferum*), le plus magnifique des arbres forestiers de l'Amérique, a dans sa jeunesse un tronc très-lisse, et s'élève souvent à une grande hauteur sans projeter de branches latérales. Mais plus tard son écorce devient rugueuse, et de petits rudiments de branches poussent en assez grand nombre sur sa tige. La difficulté de l'ascension était donc plus apparente

que réelle. Embrassant de son mieux avec ses bras et ses genoux le tronc cylindrique, s'attachant avec ses mains aux différentes projections qui se présentaient à sa surface, tandis qu'il appuyait sur d'autres ses pieds nus, Jupiter, après avoir une ou deux fois manqué de tomber, parvint enfin à se hisser jusqu'à la première grande bifurcation du tronc, et une fois arrivé là il parut considérer sa tâche comme accomplie. Le fait est que, à une élévation de soixante à soixante-dix pieds du sol, le plus difficile de l'affaire était fait.

« Quel côté moi aller à présent, massa Will? demanda-t-il.

- Suis toujours la tige principale, celle qui est de ce côté-ci, » dit Legrand. Le nègre obéit aussitôt, et continua de s'élever, sans rencontrer en apparence d'obstacles sérieux, jusqu'à ce qu'il eût entièrement disparu dans l'épaisseur du feuillage. Tout à coup sa voix se fit entendre de nouveau.

« Falloir monter encore plus haut, massa?

- A quelle hauteur es-tu? demanda Legrand.

- Moi voir ciel au haut de l'arbre, répondit le nègre.

- Ne t'occupe pas du ciel, mais fais bien attention à ce que je vais te dire. Regarde en bas, et compte les branches qui se trouvent maintenant au-dessous de toi, toujours de ce côté-ci. Combien de branches as-tu passées?

- Une, deux, trois, quatre, cinq. Moi avoir passé cinq grosses branches de ce côté-ci, massa; moi être sur la sixième.

- En ce cas, monte encore d'une branche. »

Au bout de quelques minutes, le nègre cria qu'il était arrivé à la septième branche.

« C'est bien, Jupin, dit Legrand, qui paraissait toujours plus excité. A présent, il s'agit d'avancer sur cette branche aussi loin que tu le pourras. Si tu vois quelque chose d'extraordinaire, tu me le diras. »

Le peu de doutes que j'avais pu conserver sur l'état mental de mon pauvre ami avaient disparu. Il n'était plus possible de se faire illusion à cet égard : c'était une folie bien caractérisée, et je commençai à songer sérieusement aux moyens de ramener Legrand chez lui. Pendant que je réfléchissais sur ce que je devais faire, la voix de Jupiter se fit entendre de nouveau :

« Moi pas oser aventurer moi bien loin sur la branche; être presque tout bois mort.

- Tu dis, Jupiter, que c'est une branche morte? cria Legrand d'une voix altérée.

- Oui, massa; être branche morte, bien morte.

- Que faire? au nom du ciel! demanda Legrand en proie à une vive agitation.

- Que faire? repris-je, heureux de trouver cette occasion d'entrer en matière : nous en retourner, comme d'honnêtes gens, coucher à l'ermitage. Voyons, Legrand, il se fait tard, et vous vous souvenez de votre promesse.

- Jupiter! cria-t-il sans prêter la moindre attention à ce que je disais, Jupiter! m'entends-tu?

- Oui, massa Will, moi entendre vous très-bien.

- Eh bien! fais une entaille dans le bois avec ton couteau, et vois s'il est tout à fait pourri.

- Lui pourri, massa, répondit le nègre au bout de quelques instants; mais pas tout à fait pourri. Moi pouvoir avancer sur la branche tout seul, c'est vrai.

- Comment, *tout seul*! qu'entends-tu par là?

- Moi entendre *carabé*. *Carabé* bien lourd. Supposons moi lâcher lui, et la branche pas casser avec poids de nègre tout seul.

- Impudent maraud! s'écria Legrand qui me parut avoir l'esprit soulagé d'un grand poids; comment oses-tu me conter de pareilles balivernes? Si tu as le malheur de lâcher l'insecte, je te casse le cou. Entends-tu bien cela?

- Oui, massa. Pas fâcher vous pour ça.

- Eh bien donc, écoute maintenant. Si tu avances sur cette branche aussi loin que tu croiras pouvoir le faire avec prudence, et cela sans lâcher l'insecte, je te fais cadeau d'un dollar d'argent lorsque tu descendras.

- J'y vas, j'y vas, massa Will, répliqua aussitôt le nègre; là, moi être déjà presque au bout.

- Au bout! répéta Legrand. Prétends-tu dire que tu es au bout de la branche?

-Tout à l'heure, massa. 0.... ô.... oh!... miséricorde!... Quoi donc li être là-bas sur la branche?

-Eh bien! s'écria Legrand enchanté, qu'y a-t-il?

- Li être seulement tête de mort. Quelqu'un avoir laissé tête à lui sur l'arbre, et corbeaux avoir mangé toute la chair.

- Une tête de mort, dis-tu? à merveille! Et comment tient-elle à la branche?

-Attendez, massa; moi va regarder. Oh! oh! être bien singulier! li être gros clou fiché dans tête de mort et attacher elle à la branche.

- C'est parfait. A présent, Jupiter, tu vas faire exactement ce que je vais te dire. M'entends-tu bien?

- Oui, massa.

- En ce cas, attention! Cherche l'œil gauche de la tête de mort.

-0h! ah! ... être drôle. Moi pas voir l'œil gauche du tout.

- Imbécile!... Ne sais-tu donc pas distinguer ta main droite de ta main gauche?

- Bien sûr, moi savoir ça : être main gauche avec quoi moi fendre du bois.

- Sans doute, puisque tu es gaucher. Eh bien! ton œil gauche est du même côté que ta main gauche. A présent, j'imagine que tu es en état de trouver l'œil gauche de la tête de mort, ou du moins la place où était l'œil gauche. L'as-tu trouvé? »

Il y eut une longue pause. Enfin, le nègre demanda

« Être œil gauche de tête de mort du même côté que main gauche de tête de mort aussi? Parce que tête de mort avoir pas de mains du tout. C'est égal! moi avoir trouvé œil gauche. Voilà œil gauche! Quoi faire à présent?

- Fais passer le scarabée par la cavité de cet œil, et laisse-le descendre de toute la longueur de la ficelle, mais sans la lâcher.

- C'est fait, massa Will. Pas difficile, passer *carabé* par le trou. Regardez-le à présent.»

La personne de Jupiter était restée, pendant ce dialogue, complètement invisible; mais on pouvait maintenant distinguer le scarabée qu'il avait laissé descendre, conformément aux instructions de son maître, et qui étincelait, comme un point d'or bruni aux derniers rayons du soleil couchant, dont quelques-uns éclairaient encore faiblement la hauteur sur laquelle nous étions. L'insecte était entièrement dégagé des branches, et si on l'eût laissé tomber, c'est à nos pieds qu'il serait tombé. Legrand prit

aussitôt la faux, et la manœuvrant vigoureusement, nettoya un espace circulaire de trois à quatre verges de diamètre, précisément au-dessous du scarabée : cela fait, il ordonna à Jupiter de lâcher la ficelle et de descendre de l'arbre.

Mon ami enfonça une cheville dans la terre, à l'endroit même où le scarabée était tombé; puis, tirant de sa poche un cordeau à mesurer, il le fixa par une extrémité au point du tronc du tulipier le plus rapproché de la cheville, et le déroula jusqu'à cette cheville : il continua ensuite à le développer, toujours en ligne droite, dans la direction déjà déterminée par ces deux points, l'arbre et la cheville, jusqu'à la distance de cinquante pieds, Jupiter nettoyant les broussailles avec sa faux. Ce point extrême de la ligne fut marqué par une autre cheville, autour de laquelle un cercle d'environ quatre pieds de diamètre fut grossièrement tracé. Legrand prenant alors une bêche et nous donnant les deux autres, à Jupiter et à moi, nous invita à creuser immédiatement un trou en cet endroit.

Je n'avais jamais eu, à vrai dire, beaucoup de goût pour les passe-temps de ce genre, et dans le cas actuel surtout, je me serais très-volontiers excusé car la nuit arrivait, et l'exercice que nous avions pris m'avait déjà fatigué. Mais je ne voyais aucun moyen de me soustraire à cette corvée, et je craignais de provoquer, par un refus, quelque accès d'irritabilité chez mon pauvre ami. Si du moins j'avais pu compter sur l'assistance de Jupiter, je n'aurais point hésité à essayer de reconduire de force ce malheureux à son habitation; mais je connaissais trop bien le caractère du vieux noir pour pouvoir espérer que, dans aucun cas, il consentit à me prêter main-forte dans une lutte personnelle contre son maître. Je ne doutai point que ce dernier ne fût infecté de quelqu'un des préjugés superstitieux des États du midi au sujet de trésors cachés, et qu'il n'eût été confirmé dans ses hallucinations par la découverte du scarabée, peut-être même par la persistance de Jupiter à soutenir que c'était un vrai scarabée d'or. Un esprit déjà malade avait pu facilement céder à des suggestions de ce genre, surtout si elles coïncidaient avec des idées préconçues; et puis je me rappelai ce que le pauvre garçon

m'avait dit lui-même du scarabée, qui devait *faire sa fortune*. En somme, je n'étais pas moins embarrassé que contrarié : cependant je me décidai à faire de nécessité vertu, c'est-à-dire à me mettre à creuser comme Legrand et Jupiter, afin de convaincre plus tôt notre visionnaire, par le témoignage de ses propres yeux, de la vanité de ses rêves.

Les lanternes ayant été allumées, nous nous mîmes à l'ouvrage avec un zèle digne d'une cause plus rationnelle : les reflets lumineux, se jouant sur nos personnes et sur nos outils, composaient un groupe fort pittoresque; mais je ne pus m'empêcher de penser que l'occupation à laquelle nous nous livrions eût paru passablement suspecte aux voyageurs que le hasard aurait conduits dans cette solitude.

Pendant deux heures, nous ne cessâmes de creuser, sans presque échanger une parole. Ce qui nous gênait le plus, c'étaient les aboiements du chien, qui paraissait prendre un intérêt tout particulier à nos travaux. Il finit par faire un tel vacarme, que nous craignîmes, ou plutôt que Legrand manifesta la crainte qu'il ne donnât l'alarme à quelque maraudeur égaré dans ces parages; pour mon compte, je me serais réjoui de toute interruption qui m'eût procuré le moyen de ramener mon ami chez lui. Jupiter se chargea enfin d'imposer silence à notre bruyant compagnon; il s'élança hors du trou, et ayant muselé l'animal avec une de ses bretelles, il reprit sa tâche avec un air de grande satisfaction.

Quand les deux heures furent écoulées, nous étions parvenus à une profondeur de cinq pieds sans rencontrer le moindre indice qui pût annoncer la présence d'un trésor. Il y eut alors une pause générale, et je commençai à espérer que la farce était finie. Cependant Legrand, quoique évidemment déconcerté, s'essuya le front d'un air pensif, et se remit à l'ouvrage. Notre excavation occupait déjà toute l'étendue du cercle de quatre pieds de diamètre : nous élargîmes un peu cette limite, et nous creusâmes encore deux pieds plus avant. Mais ce fut en vain : rien ne se montra. Notre chercheur de trésor, que je plaignais sincèrement, se décida enfin, avec le

désappointement le plus amer peint sur tous ses traits, à se hisser hors du trou, et se mit en devoir, mais lentement et avec une évidente répugnance, d'endosser son habit, qu'il avait jeté de côté pour être plus libre dans ses mouvements. Je m'abstins de toute observation. Jupiter, sur un signe de son maître, commença à rassembler nos outils. Cela fait, et le chien ayant été démuselé, nous reprîmes, dans un profond silence, le chemin de l'île.

A peine avions-nous fait une douzaine de pas, que Legrand, laissant tout à coup échapper un jurement énergique, marcha droit à Jupiter et le saisit au collet. Le nègre, ébahi, donna à ses yeux et à sa bouche toute la dilatation dont ces organes étaient susceptibles, et lâchant bèches et lanternes, tomba à genoux.

« Misérable! dit Legrand en faisant siffler les syllabes entre ses dents serrées par la colère; infernal coquin! parle, te dis-je! Réponds-moi sur-le-champ, et sans prévarication! Quel est, quel est ton œil gauche?

- O miséricorde, massa Will! Être là œil gauche à moi, bien sûr!» répondit le nègre terrifié; et appliquant la main sur son œil *droit*, il l'y maintint opiniâtrement, comme s'il eût craint que son maître n'eût des intentions hostiles contre cet organe visuel.

« Je m'en doutais! je le savais! hurrah!» vociféra Legrand; et lâchant Jupiter, il se mit à exécuter une série de cabrioles et d'entrechats, au grand étonnement de son valet, qui, se relevant, promena, sans proférer un mot, ses regards stupides de son maître à moi, et de moi à son maître.

« Allons! dit celui-ci, il faut retourner sur nos pas : la partie n'est pas finie; » et en disant ces mots, il se dirigea de nouveau vers le tulipier.

« Jupiter, reprit-il, lorsque nous fûmes arrivés au pied de l'arbre, comment la tête de mort était-elle clouée à la branche? Avait-elle le visage en haut, ou tourné contre la branche?

- Visage être tourné en l'air, massa et corbeaux pouvoir becqueter yeux à leur aise.

- Très-bien. Maintenant, est-ce par cet œil-ci ou par celui-là que tu as laissé tomber le scarabée?» Et il toucha successivement les deux yeux de Jupiter.

« Être celui-ci, massa; oeil gauche, tout comme vous dire à moi.» Et en parlant ainsi, le malheureux nègre continuait d'indiquer son oeil droit.

« C'est bon. Il faut recommencer notre opération.»

Là-dessus, mon ami, dans la folie duquel je voyais maintenant ou du moins croyais voir certains indices de méthode, enleva la cheville qui marquait l'endroit où était tombé le scarabée, et la reporta à trois pouces environ à l'ouest de sa première position; puis, tendant de nouveau sa mesure du tronc de l'arbre à la cheville, et continuant de la dérouler en ligne droite, dans le prolongement de cette nouvelle direction, jusqu'à la distance de cinquante pieds, il arriva ainsi à un point éloigné de plusieurs toises de celui où nous avions creusé.

Un cercle un peu plus grand que le premier fut tracé autour de ce nouveau point, et nous nous re-mîmes à bêcher. J'étais excédé de fatigue; et cependant, sans pouvoir me rendre compte de ce qui produisait en moi ce changement, je n'éprouvais plus la même répugnance pour la tâche qui m'était imposée. Je prenais maintenant au résultat de cette bizarre entreprise un étrange intérêt, et je partageais même jusqu'à un certain point l'exaltation de mon ami : peut-être y avait-il au milieu de toutes les extravagances de ce dernier un air d'assurance réfléchi, un je ne sais quoi, qui m'imposait malgré moi. Je creusai donc avec ardeur, et plus d'une fois je me surpris cherchant, avec quelque chose qui ressemblait singulièrement à l'attente, ce trésor supposé, dont la prévision avait troublé la cervelle de mon infortuné compagnon. Dans un de ces moments où je laissais ainsi ma pensée s'égarer dans les champs de l'imagination (il y avait alors une heure et demie que

nous étions à l'ouvrage), nous fûmes interrompus de nouveau par les hurlements redoublés du chien. La turbulence de cet animal avait été évidemment, dans le premier cas, l'effet d'un caprice ou l'expression d'un accès de gaieté, mais elle prenait maintenant un caractère plus sérieux. Jupiter ayant essayé de nouveau de le museler, il se débattit avec violence, et s'élançant dans le trou, il se mit à gratter convulsivement la terre avec ses pattes. Au bout de quelques secondes, il avait mis à découvert une masse d'ossements humains, formant deux squelettes complets, mêlés de plusieurs boutons de métal, et de ce qui paraissait être des lambeaux d'étoffe de laine réduits en poudre. Un ou deux coups de bêche firent sortir de terre la lame d'un grand coutelas espagnol, et en creusant encore, nous finîmes par amener trois ou quatre pièces d'or et d'argent.

A cette vue, Jupiter donna un libre cours à sa joie; mais le visage de son maître s'assombrit, et ses traits exprimèrent encore une fois le désappointement. Il nous engagea néanmoins à persévérer dans nos efforts; et à peine ces paroles étaient-elles sorties de ses lèvres, que je trébuchai et tombai en avant : le bout de mon pied s'était engagé dans un grand anneau de fer à moitié enseveli sous un monceau de terre.

Ce fut alors que nous travaillâmes tout de bon, et je ne me rappelle pas avoir jamais passé dix minutes en proie à une excitation plus intense. Dans ce laps de temps, nous étions parvenus à déterrer ou plutôt à découvrir un coffre en bois, de forme oblongue, qui paraissait, à en juger par son état de parfaite conservation et son étonnante dureté, avoir été soumis à l'action de quelque substance chimique. Ce coffre avait trois pieds et demi de long, sur trois de large, et deux et demi de profondeur. Il était fortement maintenu par des bandes de fer forgé, rivées et formant tout autour une espèce de treillage. De chaque côté, et près du couvercle, étaient trois anneaux de fer, en tout six, à l'aide desquels six personnes pouvaient le manœuvrer. Nos efforts réunis parvinrent à peine à l'ébranler, et nous reconnûmes l'impossibilité d'enlever une si lourde masse. Heureusement le couvercle n'était assujéti que par deux verrous. Nous les tirâmes, tremblants et palpitants d'anxiété.

L'instant d'après, un trésor d'une valeur incalculable était étalé devant nous. Les lumières de nos lanternes tombant, du bord du trou, sur le coffre ouvert, firent jaillir de cet amas confus d'or et de pierreries, des feux dont nos yeux furent littéralement éblouis.

Je n'essayerai point de décrire les sentiments divers avec lesquels je contemplai ce spectacle; mais l'étonnement dominait tous les autres. Legrand paraissait épuisé par son excitation même, et ne put prononcer que quelques mots. Quant à Jupiter, son visage se couvrit pendant quelques minutes d'une teinte cadavéreuse : je n'avais jamais vu face de nègre aussi blême. Il était stupéfait, anéanti. Lorsqu'il fut revenu de son premier étourdissement, il se jeta à genoux, et enfonçant dans l'or ses bras nus jusqu'aux coudes, il parut jouir avec délices de ce bain fantastique. Enfin, il s'écria, avec un profond soupir, en se parlant à lui-même :

« Et tout ça venir de *carabé* d'or! joli *carabé* d'or! pauvre petit *carabé* d'or, que moi traiter si mal! avoir pas honte, nègre? toi répondre à moi! »

Il fallut enfin que je fisse comprendre au maître et au valet la nécessité d'enlever ce trésor. Il était déjà tard, et nous n'avions pas de temps à perdre si nous voulions que le tout fût transporté à l'ermitage avant le jour. Nous ne savions trop comment nous y prendre, et nous délibérâmes longtemps, car il régnait une grande confusion dans nos idées. Nous nous décidâmes, en définitive, à alléger le coffre, en enlevant à peu près les deux tiers de son contenu, et nous pûmes alors, non sans peine, le hisser hors du trou. Les objets que nous en tirâmes furent déposés parmi les broussailles et laissés sous la garde du chien, à qui Jupiter donna les injonctions les plus strictes de ne pas bouger de là jusqu'à notre retour, et de n'aboyer sous aucun prétexte. Nous nous dirigeâmes alors en toute hâte, avec le coffre, vers l'ermitage, où nous arrivâmes sans accident, mais après des fatigues inouïes, à une heure du matin. Épuisés comme nous l'étions, il nous eût été impossible de faire davantage pour le moment. Nous nous reposâmes jusqu'à deux heures, puis nous soupâmes; après quoi nous repartîmes pour les montagnes, munis de

trois bons sacs qui, par un heureux hasard, se trouvaient chez Legrand. Arrivés au tulipier un peu avant quatre heures, nous nous partageâmes, à peu près également, le reste du trésor, et sans prendre la peine de combler les excavations que nous avions faites, nous reprîmes pour la seconde fois le chemin de la chaumière, où nous déposions nos richesses, comme les premières lueurs de l'aube se montraient à l'orient, au-dessus de la cime des arbres.

Nos forces étaient complètement à bout, mais l'excitation qui nous avait soutenus jusque-là nous refusa le repos dont nous avions besoin. Après un demi-sommeil inquiet, de trois à quatre heures, nous nous levâmes comme d'un commun accord, pour procéder à un inventaire.

Le coffre avait été rempli jusqu'au bord, et nous passâmes toute la journée et la plus grande partie de la nuit suivante à en examiner le contenu. Tout paraissait y avoir été entassé pêle-mêle, sans aucune espèce d'ordre. Ayant tout assorti avec soin, par nature d'objets, nous trouvâmes que nous étions beaucoup plus riches encore que nous ne l'avions d'abord supposé. Il y avait, en espèces, plus de quatre cent cinquante mille dollars (2 250 000 fr.), en estimant la valeur des différentes monnaies aussi exactement que nous le pûmes, d'après les cours de l'époque. Il n'y avait pas dans tout cela une seule pièce d'argent. Tout était or, monnaie d'or de vieille date et d'origine très-diverse, française, espagnole, allemande, avec quelques guinées anglaises, et un petit nombre de jetons, dont nous n'avions jamais vu d'échantillons. Il s'y trouvait plusieurs grandes médailles, très-pesantes, mais tellement usées que nous ne pûmes en déchiffrer les inscriptions. Parmi les monnaies, il n'y en avait pas d'américaines. L'estimation des pierreries fut une affaire plus difficile. Il y avait des diamants, cent dix en tout, quelques-uns d'une grosseur remarquable, et pas un qui ne fût de belle dimension; dix-huit rubis d'un éclat extraordinaire; trois cent dix émeraudes, toutes magnifiques; vingt et un saphirs, avec une opale. Toutes ces pierres avaient été démontées, puis jetées à même le coffre: les garnitures avaient été brisées ou aplaties à l'aide du marteau, comme pour empêcher qu'elles pussent être identifiées. Indépendamment de ces pierreries, nous comptâmes une

quantité considérable de pièces d'orfèvrerie; près de deux cents bagues et pendants d'oreilles d'un grand poids; de riches chaînes, au nombre de trente, si ma mémoire ne me trompe; quatre-vingt-trois crucifix massifs; cinq encensoirs en or d'un grand prix; un énorme bol à punch, orné de pampres et de groupes de figures représentant une bacchanale; deux poignées d'épées ciselées et d'un travail exquis, avec une foule d'autres objets que j'ai oubliés. Leur poids total excédait de beaucoup trois cent cinquante livres; et dans cette évaluation je n'ai pas compris cent quatre-vingt-dix-sept montres, dont trois valaient au moins cinq cents dollars (2500 fr.) pièce. La plupart de ces montres étaient fort anciennes et n'avaient aucune valeur comme instruments de précision : les mouvements étaient plus ou moins endommagés par leur séjour dans un lieu humide; mais les boîtes, garnies de pierres précieuses, étaient d'une grande richesse. Nous évaluâmes, ce soir-là, tout le contenu du coffre à un million et demi de dollars (7 500 000 fr.); mais lorsque nous disposâmes, plus tard, des pierreries et objets d'art (après en avoir réservé quelques-uns pour notre usage personnel), nous trouvâmes que notre estimation était bien inférieure à la valeur réelle des objets.

Lorsque nous eûmes enfin terminé notre inspection, et que l'excitation produite par une aventure aussi extraordinaire fut un peu calmée, Legrand, voyant que je mourais d'impatience de connaître le mot de cette merveilleuse énigme, me fit un récit détaillé de toutes les circonstances qui s'y rattachaient.

« Vous vous souvenez, me dit-il, de ce soir où je fis pour vous un croquis du scarabée. Vous n'avez pas oublié non plus que j'eus la sottise de me formaliser de l'opinion exprimée par vous, que mon dessin ressemblait à une tête de mort. Je crus d'abord que vous plaisantiez; mais, me rappelant ensuite les taches d'une forme particulière qui se trouvaient sur le dos de l'insecte, je ne pus m'empêcher de reconnaître qu'il y avait quelque chose de vrai dans votre observation. Cependant vous insistâtes, et je fus piqué de vous voir faire si peu de cas de mes talents graphiques, car je passe pour assez bon dessinateur; aussi, lorsque vous me rendîtes le morceau de

parchemin sur lequel j'avais tracé cette figure, je fus sur le point de le froisser avec humeur et de le jeter au feu.

- Le morceau de *papier*, voulez-vous dire? interrompis-je.

- Non. Il avait, en effet, l'apparence de papier, et moi-même je l'avais pris d'abord pour tel; mais lorsque je me mis à y faire mon dessin, je reconnus que c'était du parchemin très-mince. Il était d'ailleurs fort sale, comme vous pouvez vous le rappeler. Eh bien donc, au moment où j'allais le froisser entre mes doigts, mes yeux tombèrent par hasard sur le croquis que vous veniez d'examiner, et vous pouvez juger de mon étonnement, lorsque je reconnus en effet le dessin, bien arrêté, d'une tête de mort à l'endroit même où j'avais, à ce qu'il me semblait, tracé la figure d'un scarabée. Cet étonnement fut tel, que je ne pus pas, au premier abord, rassembler et coordonner mes idées. Cependant, quoiqu'il y eût dans l'aspect général, dans l'ensemble, une sorte de ressemblance entre ce dessin et le mien, je ne pouvais me dissimuler que les détails étaient entièrement différents. Je pris une chandelle, et allant m'asseoir à l'autre bout de la chambre, j'examinai la chose avec plus d'attention. Ce fut alors qu'en retournant le morceau de parchemin, je retrouvai de l'autre côté mon propre dessin, tel que je l'avais fait. Ma première impression fut un mouvement de surprise, de cette étrange coïncidence qui faisait qu'à mon insu il se trouvât sur le revers de ce parchemin une tête de mort correspondant exactement à mon scarabée, et que cette tête de mort offrit une analogie aussi frappante avec mon dessin, non-seulement par sa forme générale, mais aussi par ses proportions. La singularité d'un pareil fait, je l'avoue, confondit de nouveau toutes mes idées : c'est l'effet assez ordinaire de ces sortes de coïncidences. L'esprit cherche à établir une liaison, à remonter de l'effet à la cause, et ne pouvant y parvenir, se trouve frappé d'une espèce de paralysie momentanée. Mais lorsque je fus revenu de ce premier étourdissement, une nouvelle lumière vint m'éclairer peu à peu, et porta mon étonnement à un degré plus haut encore que n'avait fait la coïncidence des dessins. Je commençai à me rappeler d'une manière distincte, positive, qu'il n'y avait

aucun dessin sur le parchemin lorsque j'avais fait mon croquis du scarabée. J'en acquis la certitude absolue; car je me souvins parfaitement d'avoir tourné ce parchemin, d'abord d'un côté, puis de l'autre, en cherchant l'endroit le plus propre. Si la tête de mort y avait été alors, je l'eusse infailliblement remarquée. Il y avait là un mystère qu'il m'était impossible de résoudre; mais dès ce moment même, une faible lueur commença à poindre dans les replis secrets de mon intelligence, où se formait une vague conception de cette vérité dont l'aventure de la nuit dernière nous a donné une si magnifique démonstration. Je me levai aussitôt, et mettant mon parchemin en lieu de sûreté, j'ajournai toute réflexion ultérieure à ce sujet jusqu'au moment où je serais seul.

« Quand vous fûtes parti, et Jupiter profondément endormi, je me mis à examiner de nouveau l'affaire, mais cette fois avec plus de méthode. Et d'abord, je voulus me rendre compte de la manière dont ce parchemin se trouvait entre mes mains. C'était sur la côte de la terre ferme que nous avions découvert le scarabée, à un mille environ à l'est de l'île, et un peu au-dessus de la marque de haute mer. Au moment où je mettais la main dessus, il me mordit si vivement que je fus forcé de lâcher prise. Jupiter voulant, à son tour, s'emparer de l'insecte, qui s'était envolé de son côté, chercha, avec sa circonspection habituelle, une feuille ou quelque autre objet analogue pour le saisir. C'est alors que ses yeux rencontrèrent, ainsi que les miens, ce lambeau de parchemin, que je pris pour du papier : il était à moitié enfoui dans le sable, avec une pointe en l'air. Non loin de là, je remarquai les restes de ce qui me parut avoir été le canot d'un navire. Ces débris d'un naufrage étaient sans doute fort anciens, car leur forme était presque méconnaissable.

« Jupiter ramassa donc ce parchemin, et après avoir enveloppé dedans le scarabée, me le donna. Ayant repris bientôt après le chemin de l'ermitage, nous rencontrâmes en route le lieutenant G.... Je lui fis voir l'insecte, et il me pria de le lui laisser emporter au fort. Je n'eus pas plutôt accédé à sa requête, qu'il se hâta de le fourrer dans la poche de son gilet,

sans le parchemin dans lequel il avait été d'abord enveloppé, et que j'avais gardé dans ma main tandis qu'il examinait le scarabée. Peut-être la crainte que je ne changeasse d'avis fut-elle pour quelque chose dans cet empressement à s'assurer du curieux insecte, car vous connaissez son enthousiasme pour tout ce qui a rapport à l'histoire naturelle. Il est probable que je remis machinalement le parchemin dans ma poche.

« Vous vous rappelez que, lorsque je m'assis à cette table pour faire mon dessin du scarabée, je ne trouvai pas de papier à l'endroit où on le met habituellement. Je cherchai dans le tiroir : il n'y en avait pas non plus. Je fouillai alors dans mes poches, dans l'espoir de trouver quelque vieille lettre, et ma main tomba sur le morceau de parchemin. J'insiste à dessein sur ces détails, quelque indifférents qu'ils puissent vous paraître, parce qu'en y réfléchissant je fus singulièrement frappé de ce concours de circonstances.

« Vous allez peut-être me regarder encore comme un rêve creux; mais le fait est que j'avais déjà établi une espèce de liaison entre ces circonstances. J'avais réuni des anneaux d'une grande chaîne, un canot à la côte, et près de ce canot un morceau de parchemin, et *non pas du papier*, portant le dessin d'une tête de mort. Vous me demanderez naturellement quel rapport je vois là. Je vous répondrai que la tête de mort est l'emblème bien connu des pirates; ils arborent dans tous leurs engagements le pavillon à tête de mort.

« Je vous faisais remarquer tout à l'heure que c'était sur du parchemin et non pas sur du papier qu'était tracée cette tête de mort. On confie rarement au parchemin des choses de peu d'importance; il est d'ailleurs beaucoup moins commode que le papier pour le dessin et pour l'écriture courante. Cette réflexion, que je fis sur-le-champ, me conduisit à penser qu'il devait y avoir quelque sens caché, quelque rapport secret, dans cette tête de mort. Je ne manquai pas non plus d'observer la forme du parchemin. Un des coins avait été détruit; mais on voyait qu'il avait été primitivement de forme oblongue : c'était une bande telle qu'on aurait pu la choisir pour y consigner

quelque note ou déclaration importante, quelque renseignement destiné à être transmis et conservé avec soin.

- Mais, interrompis-je de nouveau, vous m'avez dit que cette tête de mort *n'était pas* sur le parchemin lorsque vous fîtes le dessin de votre scarabée. Quel rapport pouvez-vous donc établir entre le canot et la tête de mort, puisque celle-ci a dû être, de votre propre aveu, tracée (Dieu sait comment ou par qui) subséquemment à votre dessin du scarabée?

- C'est là tout le mystère. Cependant j'eus, comparativement parlant, peu de difficulté à résoudre ce point de la question. Ma marche, constamment appuyée sur le rapprochement logique des faits, était sûre et ne pouvait me conduire qu'à un seul résultat. Voici, par exemple, comment je raisonnais. Lorsque je dessinaï mon scarabée, on ne voyait pas de tête de mort sur le parchemin. Quand j'eus achevé mon croquis, je vous le passai, et je ne vous perdis pas de vue pendant tout le temps qu'il fut entre vos mains. Ce n'était pas vous qui aviez dessiné la tête de mort, et il n'y avait là personne autre qui pût le faire. La chose n'avait donc pas été produite par des moyens humains, par l'action d'un homme, et pourtant la chose existait.

« Ici, je cherchai à me rappeler, et me rappelai très-distinctement les moindres incidents qui avaient accompagné cette remarquable apparition de la tête de mort. Il faisait, ce soir-là, très-froid, et nous avions un feu brillant au foyer. J'étais échauffé par l'exercice, et assis près de la table; mais vous aviez tiré votre chaise près de la cheminée. Au moment où je venais de vous passer mon croquis et où vous vous disposiez à l'examiner, Wolf, mon chien de Terre-Neuve, entra et sauta sur vous. Vous le caressâtes de la main gauche, tandis que votre main droite, qui tenait le parchemin, tombait négligemment entre vos genoux, et par conséquent très-près du feu. Il y eut même un instant où je crus que la flamme atteignait le parchemin, et j'allais vous en avertir; mais avant que j'eusse ouvert la bouche, vous aviez retiré votre main et vous étiez déjà occupé à examiner le dessin. En rapprochant toutes ces circonstances, je ne doutai plus que ce

ne fût l'*action de la chaleur* qui avait fait apparaître sur le parchemin la tête de mort que j'y voyais. Vous savez qu'il existe et qu'il a existé de tout temps des préparations chimiques à l'aide desquelles on peut écrire sur du papier ou sur du vélin, de telle façon que les caractères ne soient visibles que lorsqu'ils sont exposés à l'action du feu. C'est ainsi que l'oxyde de cobalt, dissous dans de l'acide nitrique avec addition de carbonate de potasse, puis étendu d'eau, donne une teinte purpurine qui disparaît lorsque la substance sur laquelle on a écrit vient à se refroidir, mais qui reparaît à volonté par une simple application de la chaleur.

« J'examinai alors la tête de mort avec un soin tout particulier. Ses contours extérieurs, je veux dire la partie de son contour la plus rapprochée du bord du vélin, étaient beaucoup plus distincts que le reste. Il était évident que l'action du calorique avait été imparfaite ou inégale. J'allumai aussitôt du feu, et j'exposai chaque partie du parchemin à une vive chaleur. L'effet de cette opération se borna d'abord à faire ressortir davantage les traits faiblement indiqués de la tête de mort. Cependant, en continuant mon expérience, je finis par voir apparaître, au coin du morceau de parchemin diagonalement opposé à l'endroit où se trouvait cette tête de mort, une figure, qu'au premier abord je pris pour une chèvre. Mais, en l'examinant de plus près, je fus convaincu que c'était un chevreau qu'on avait voulu représenter.

- Ah! ah! m'écriai-je en riant; je n'ai pas, à coup sûr, le droit de me moquer de vous, un million et demi de dollars n'est point matière à plaisanterie; mais vous n'allez sans doute pas établir un troisième anneau dans votre chaîne; vous ne prétendrez pas qu'il existe de rapports particuliers entre vos pirates et une chèvre. Les pirates, comme vous le savez, n'ont rien de commun avec les chèvres; les chèvres sont du domaine de l'agriculture.

- Mais je viens de vous dire que la figure en question *n'était pas* celle d'une chèvre.

- Chèvre ou chevreau, la différence n'est pas grande.

- Elle n'est pas grande, mais elle existe, reprit Legrand. Vous avez peut-être entendu parler d'un certain capitaine Kidd.⁵⁷ Eh bien! il me vint immédiatement à l'esprit que cette figure d'animal était une espèce de rébus ou de signature hiéroglyphique. Je dis signature, parce que la position qu'elle occupait sur le vélin pouvait suggérer cette idée; quant à la tête de mort, au coin diagonalement opposé, elle avait l'air d'un sceau ou cachet. Ce qui m'intriguait, c'était l'absence de la partie principale, du corps de mon document supposé, du texte de mon commentaire.

- Vous vous attendiez, je présume, à trouver une lettre entre les armoiries et la signature?

- Une lettre, ou quelque chose comme cela. Le fait est que j'étais frappé du pressentiment de quelque bonne fortune extraordinaire. Vous dire pour quoi, me serait très-difficile. Peut-être, après tout, n'était-ce qu'un désir plutôt qu'une espérance. Mais, le croiriez-vous? la sotte observation de Jupiter, que le scarabée était d'or massif, avait frappé mon imagination. Et puis il y avait quelque chose de si extraordinaire dans cette série d'accidents et de coïncidences! Remarquez en effet cette singulière fatalité qui voulut que toutes ces choses arrivassent précisément le seul jour de l'année où il ait fait ou pu faire assez froid pour avoir du feu; remarquez que sans ce feu, ou même sans l'intervention accidentelle du chien au moment où vous étiez près du foyer, le parchemin à la main, je n'aurais jamais soupçonné l'existence de la tête de mort, et par conséquent jamais découvert le trésor!

- Continuez votre récit, lui dis-je; car vous avez vivement piqué ma curiosité.

- Soit. Vous avez nécessairement connaissance de quelqu'une de ces traditions, de ces mille et une rumeurs qui circulent au sujet de trésors enfouis, quelque part sur la côte de l'Atlantique, par Kidd et ses associés. Ces rumeurs, grossies ou défigurées par la renommée, devaient néanmoins avoir quelque

⁵⁷ (note 1. *Kidd* se prononce comme *kid*, chevreau)

fondement, reposer sur un fait positif; et leur existence continue, pendant un long laps de temps, me semblait autoriser cette conclusion, que le trésor enfoui était encore dans sa cachette. Si, après l'y avoir laissé pendant un certain temps, Kidd l'avait ensuite repris, il y a tout lieu de croire que ces bruits ne seraient pas venus jusqu'à nous, du moins sous leur forme actuelle et invariable.

Veillez, en effet, remarquer que tous ces bruits sont relatifs à des chercheurs de trésors, et non pas à des trouveurs de trésors; si le pirate avait repris son argent, l'affaire eût fini là, et il n'en aurait plus été question. Il me parut donc vraisemblable que quelque accident, par exemple la perte de la note qui indiquait le lieu du dépôt, n'avait pas permis à Kidd de le retrouver : cet accident avait probablement été connu de ses associés, qui, faisant de leur côté de vaines recherches, puisqu'ils procédaient au hasard, avaient donné naissance, puis cours populaire à ces bruits aujourd'hui si répandus. Avez-vous jamais ouï dire que quelque trésor ait été découvert sur la côte?

- Jamais!

- On sait pourtant, à n'en pas douter, que Kidd avait accumulé d'immenses richesses. Je considérai comme un fait constant que ces richesses étaient toujours dans le sein de la terre, et peut-être ne serez-vous pas surpris lorsque je vous dirai que je conçus l'espoir, presque la certitude, que ce parchemin, si étrangement trouvé, contenait l'indication du lieu où ce trésor était déposé.

- Et comment procédâtes-vous alors?

- Je présentai de nouveau le vélin au feu, après avoir augmenté l'intensité de la chaleur; mais rien ne parut. Je m'avisai qu'il était possible que les souillures dont il était couvert et en quelque sorte imprégné, ne fussent pas étrangères à l'insuccès de cette tentative. Je le nettoyai soigneusement, en versant dessus de l'eau tiède; après quoi, je le mis dans un poêlon de fer-blanc, la tête de mort en dessous, et je posai ce poêlon sur un réchaud de charbons ardents. Au bout de quelques minutes, le métal ayant acquis un haut degré de chaleur, j'ôtai mon parchemin, et, à mon

inexprimable joie, je remarquai en plusieurs endroits des caractères qui me parurent être des rangées de chiffres. Je le replaçai dans le poêlon, où je le laissai encore une minute. Lorsque je le retirai pour la seconde fois, il était dans l'état où vous allez le voir.»

Là-dessus, Legrand ayant soumis le parchemin à l'action du feu, me le présenta. Les caractères qui suivent s'y trouvaient grossièrement tracés, avec une sorte d'encre rouge entre la tête de mort et le chevreau :

53 † † † 305)) 6* ; 4826) 4†) ; 806* ; 48† 8¶ 60)) 85,

1 † (; † * 8† 83 (88) 5*† ; 46 (; 88 * 96 * ? ; 8) * †

(; 485) 5 * † 2 ; * † (; 4956 * 2 (5 * -- 4) 8 ¶ 8 * ;

4069285) ;) 6 † 8) 4 † † ; 1 († 9 ; 48081 ; 8 : 8† 1 ;

48 † 85 ; 4) 485 † 528806 * 81 († 9 ; 48 ; (88 ; 4 († ? 34 ;

48) 4 † ; 161 ; : 188 ; † ? ;

- Mais, lui dis-je en lui rendant son parchemin, je ne suis pas plus avancé qu'auparavant. Quand tous les trésors de Golconde seraient le prix attaché à la solution de cette énigme, je serais forcé d'y renoncer.

- Et pourtant, reprit Legrand, cette solution n'est pas, à beaucoup près, aussi difficile que vous pouvez le supposer, d'après une inspection rapide de ces caractères. Ces caractères, ainsi qu'on le comprend au premier aspect, forment ce qu'on appelle un chiffre, c'est-à-dire qu'ils ont un sens; mais d'après ce qu'on sait de la vie et de l'éducation de Kidd, je ne devais pas le supposer capable d'avoir eu recours à une combinaison cryptographique bien compliquée. Je

jugeai donc que celle-ci était assez simple, quoiqu'un marin illettré eût pu la considérer comme indéchiffrable sans le secours de la clef.

- Et vous avez réellement déchiffré ce grimoire?

- Très-facilement. J'en ai déchiffré d'autres mille fois plus complexes. Les circonstances, une certaine disposition d'esprit, m'ont fait prendre intérêt à ces sortes de logogripes, et je doute que l'intelligence humaine puisse combiner une énigme de ce genre, dont l'intelligence humaine ne puisse parvenir à trouver le mot. Quoi qu'il en soit, du moment où j'eus constaté l'existence d'une série non interrompue de caractères lisibles, je daignai à peine m'arrêter à la difficulté d'en dégager le sens.

Dans le cas actuel, comme toutes les fois qu'il est question d'écriture secrète, la première chose à faire était de reconnaître la *langue* du chiffre; car les principes du déchiffrement, surtout lorsqu'il s'agit des combinaisons les plus simples, se modifient suivant le génie de chaque idiome. En général il n'y a pas d'autre moyen que d'essayer successivement, en se dirigeant d'après les probabilités, l'application du chiffre à toutes les langues que l'on connaît, jusqu'à ce que l'on ait rencontré la bonne. Mais, dans la pièce que nous avons sous les yeux, la signature levait toute difficulté : le jeu de mots sur le nom propre *Kidd* n'existe que dans la langue anglaise. Sans cette circonstance, j'aurais commencé mes expériences par l'espagnol et le français, les deux langues qu'on supposerait le plus naturellement avoir été employées par un pirate des mers de l'Amérique espagnole. Dans l'état des choses je presumai que le texte du cryptographe était anglais.

« Il n'y a, comme vous le voyez, pas de divisions entre les mots : si les mots avaient été séparés, ma tâche aurait été bien simplifiée. J'aurais commencé par faire le relevé des mots les plus courts, et du moment où il se serait rencontré, comme il est vraisemblable, un mot d'une seule lettre, tel que *a* ou *I*,⁵⁸ j'aurais considéré ma solution comme assurée. Mais, à défaut de divisions, je

⁵⁸ ⁵⁸ *A*, un, une ; *I*, je.

m'occupai d'abord de relever les différents signes qui composaient mon texte, et de prendre note du nombre de fois que chacun se présentait. Le résultat de ce dépouillement fut le tableau que voici :

Le caractère 8 se présente 33 fois.

;	26
4	19
‡ et)	16
*	13
5	12
6	11
(10
† et 1	8
0	6
9 et 2	5
: et 3	4
?	3
℥	2
-- et .	1

« Or, la lettre qui se reproduit le plus fréquemment dans la langue anglaise, est la lettre *e*. Les autres viennent ensuite dans l'ordre ci-après, *a, o, i, d, h, n, r, s, t, u, y, c, f, g, l, m, w, b, k, p, q, x, z*. Mais la lettre *e* domine

tellement, qu'il est rare de rencontrer une phrase de quelque étendue, dans laquelle elle ne soit pas le caractère qui se représente le plus souvent.

« Voilà donc, tout d'abord une donnée sur laquelle nous pouvons asseoir quelque chose de plus qu'une simple conjecture. On comprend parfaitement l'usage général qu'on peut faire du tableau qui précède; mais pour le cas particulier qui nous occupe en ce moment, nous y aurons très-peu recours. Le signe dominant de notre chiffre étant 8, nous le considérerons comme correspondant à l'*e* de l'alphabet naturel. Pour donner à cette hypothèse un nouveau degré de probabilité, nous n'avons qu'à voir si ce signe 8 se rencontre souvent double, car la lettre *e* est redoublée en anglais dans une foule de mots, comme *meet, fleet, speed, seen, been, agree, etc.* Or, nous trouvons que le signe 8 n'est pas redoublé moins de cinq fois, et cela dans l'espace de quelques lignes.

« Soit donc $8 = e$. Maintenant, de tous les mots de la langue, l'article *the* (le, la, les) est le plus commun. Il s'agit d'examiner si nous ne rencontrons pas dans notre chiffre des répétitions de trois caractères différents, disposés dans le même ordre, le dernier de ces caractères étant 8. Si nous rencontrons des combinaisons ternaires ainsi répétées, il sera très-probable qu'elles représenteront le mot *the*. Nous avons ici sept groupes de ce genre, composés des caractères ;48. Nous pouvons donc admettre que ; représente *t*, que 4 représente *h*, et que 8 représente *e*, la valeur de ce dernier signe étant maintenant bien établie. C'est un grand pas de fait.

« Mais la découverte de ce monosyllable nous permet d'établir un point beaucoup plus important, c'est-à-dire plusieurs commencements et terminaisons d'autres mots. Reportons- nous, par exemple, à l'avant-dernière combinaison ; 48 , vers la fin du chiffre. Nous savons que le ; qui vient immédiatement après est le commencement d'un mot, et, sur les six caractères ;(88;4 qui suivent l'article *the*, nous en connaissons cinq. Si nous substituons à ces caractères les lettres qu'ils représentent, en laissant un blanc pour le signe inconnu, nous avons

t eeth

« Maintenant, adaptant successivement à ce blanc toutes les lettres de l'alphabet, nous trouvons qu'on ne peut pas former de mot dont ce *th* final fasse partie. Nous l'écartons donc, comme appartenant à un autre mot, et il nous reste

t ee

« Nous repassons encore une fois tout l'alphabet, s'il est nécessaire, et nous arrivons au mot *tree* (arbre), comme la seule leçon possible. Nous avons ainsi gagné une autre lettre, *r*, représentée par le signe (, et nous avons déchiffré deux mots juxtaposés, *the tree* (l'arbre).

« Un peu plus loin, nous retrouvons une dernière fois la combinaison ;48 ou *the*, à laquelle nous nous arrêterons. Le texte, à partir des mots déjà déchiffrés, nous présente l'arrangement suivant

the tree ;4 (‡ ? 34 the

ou, substituant les lettres naturelles aux signes que nous connaissons,

the tree thr‡ ?3h the

Remplaçons, pour plus de clarté, les signes inconnus par des points, nous aurons

the tree thr...h the

L'esprit complète immédiatement le mot *through* (à travers, par), ce qui nous donne trois nouvelles lettres, *o*, *u* et *g*, représentées respectivement par les signes ‡ ? et 3.

« Si maintenant, examinant notre chiffre avec attention, nous y cherchons des combinaisons de caractères connus, nous trouverons, non loin du commencement, le groupe suivant

† 83(88, ou *egree*,

qui appartient évidemment au mot *degree* (degré), et nous donne une autre lettre, *d*, représentée par le signe qui précède.

« Quatre lettres après le mot *degree*, nous avons la combinaison

;46(;88

« Traduisant, comme nous l'avons fait plus haut, les caractères connus, et représentant les inconnus par des points, nous lisons

th.rtee

disposition qui nous suggère aussitôt le mot *thirteen* (treize), et nous fournit deux nouvelles lettres, *i* et *n*, représentées par *b* et ***.

« Si nous nous reportons maintenant tout au commencement du cryptographe nous y trouvons la combinaison

53‡††

« L'application du même procédé de traduction nous donne

good

et, en dernière analyse, *a good* (un bon, une bonne), la première lettre ne pouvant être qu'un *a*.

« Nous ferons bien, maintenant, pour ne pas nous embrouiller, de résumer en un petit tableau les découvertes que nous avons faites :

5 représente a

† d

8 e

3 g

4	h
6	i
*	n
‡	o
(r
;	t

« Ainsi, nous connaissons déjà dix des lettres les plus importantes, et il serait inutile de pousser plus loin les détails de cette analyse. J'en ai dit assez pour vous faire voir que la clef des chiffres de cette nature est facile à trouver, et pour vous donner une idée générale des procédés ordinaires de déchiffrement. Mais, je vous le répète, la pièce que nous avons sous les yeux, et dans laquelle chaque lettre de l'alphabet est représentée par un autre signe conventionnel, appartient, comme spécimen de cryptographie, à l'enfance de l'art. Il ne me reste plus qu'à vous en donner la traduction complète, et la voici :

« Un bon verre dans l'hostel de l'évêque dans la chaise du diable quarante et un degrés treize minutes nord-est par nord tige principale septième branche à l'est laisser tomber de l'œil gauche de la tête de mort un cordeau de l'arbre par le point cinquante pieds au large. »⁵⁹

- Mais, dis-je, l'énigme me paraît à peu après aussi obscure qu'auparavant. Que peut signifier tout cet imbroglio de «chaise du diable,» de «tête de mort» et «d'hostel de l'évêque? »

⁵⁹ Voici le texte anglais : « A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat forty one degrees and thirteen minutes northeast and by north main branch seventh limb east sine (sic) shoot from the left eye of the death's head a bee line from the tree through the shot fifty feet out. »

- Je conviens, répondit Legrand, que la chose, vue superficiellement, paraît encore passablement mystérieuse. Mon premier soin fut de rétablir dans ce texte les divisions naturelles qui avaient dû être dans la pensée de l'écrivain.

- Vous voulez dire d'en rétablir la ponctuation?

- Quelque chose comme cela.

- Je suis curieux de savoir comment vous vous y prîtes.

- Je vis que l'écrivain, sans doute afin de rendre la solution du problème plus difficile, s'était appliqué à joindre tous ces mots ensemble, sans aucune division. Or, il est probable, je dirai presque certain, qu'en opérant ainsi, un homme peu habitué à manier la plume dépassera le but qu'il veut atteindre. Lorsqu'il arrivera, dans le cours de sa composition, à une interruption du sens, qui exigerait naturellement une pause ou un point, c'est presque toujours là qu'il serrera ses caractères plus qu'ailleurs. Si vous voulez jeter les yeux sur le manuscrit, vous y reconnaîtrez facilement cinq endroits où les caractères sont ainsi serrés les uns contre les autres. Je me guidai d'après ces indices, et voici comment j'établis ma division :

« Un bon verre dans l'hostel de l'évêque dans la chaise du diable - quarante et un degrés treize minutes - nord-est par nord - tige principale septième branche à l'est - laisser tomber de l'œil gauche de la tête de mort - un cordeau de l'arbre par le point cinquante pieds au large.

- C'est fort bien, dis-je; mais votre division me laisse encore dans les ténèbres.

- J'y restai moi-même pendant quelques jours, reprit Legrand. Pendant ce temps, j'allai aux informations dans le voisinage de l'île, m'enquérant partout de l'existence de quelque bâtiment appelé «l'hôtel de l'évêque» (*Bishop's hostel*), car je ne m'arrêtai pas à la forme surannée du mot *hostel*. Ces premières recherches ne m'ayant procuré aucun renseignement, j'étais sur le point d'étendre le champ de mes investigations et de procéder en même temps d'une

manière plus systématique, lorsqu'un matin il me vint tout à coup à l'esprit que ce *Bishop's hostel* pouvait bien avoir quelque rapport à une ancienne famille du nom de Bessops, qui était, de temps immémorial, en possession d'un vieux manoir, à quatre milles environ au nord de l'île. Je m'y transportai, et je questionnai les plus vieux nègres de l'habitation. Enfin, une femme âgée me dit qu'elle avait ouï parler d'un endroit qu'on appelait «le château de Bessop» (*Bessop's castle*), et qu'elle croyait même pouvoir m'y conduire. Du reste, elle ajouta que ce n'était ni un château, ni une taverne, mais simplement un grand rocher.

« Séduite par l'offre d'une récompense libérale, cette vieille femme consentit à me servir de guide, et nous trouvâmes, non sans quelque peine, l'endroit en question. Je la congédiai alors, et me mis à examiner les lieux. Le « château de Bessop » se composait d'un amas irrégulier de gros rocs, dont un surtout était remarquable par ses dimensions, non moins que par sa position en quelque sorte isolée, et une certaine configuration artificielle. Je grimpai au sommet, et je me trouvai alors fort embarrassé de savoir ce que je devais faire.

« Tandis que je me livrais à mes réflexions, mes regards tombèrent sur une étroite corniche qui se trouvait dans la face orientale du rocher, à trois pieds environ au-dessous de moi. Cette corniche, qui formait une saillie d'environ dix-huit pouces, n'avait pas plus d'un pied de largeur; mais une espèce d'enfoncement ou de niche, pratiqué dans le roc, immédiatement au-dessus, lui donnait une certaine ressemblance avec ces fauteuils à dossier creux dont nos ancêtres faisaient usage. Je ne doutai point que ce ne fût là la « chaise du diable » dont il était question dans le manuscrit, et il me sembla dès lors que je tenais tout le secret de l'énigme.

« Je savais que le « bon verre » ne pouvait signifier qu'une longue vue : les marins emploient rarement ce mot dans une autre acception. Je compris donc qu'il s'agissait de faire ici usage d'une lunette et d'en faire usage dans une certaine direction, déterminée d'une manière précise et invariable; car les

indications, «quarante et un degrés treize minutes » et « nord-est par nord » ne pouvaient avoir d'autre objet. L'imagination vivement excitée par ces découvertes, je me hâtai de regagner mon ermitage et, m'étant muni d'une longue vue, je retournai au rocher.

« Je me laissai glisser du sommet sur la corniche, et je reconnus qu'on ne pouvait s'y tenir assis que dans une certaine position, fait qui confirma mes pressentiments. Je pris alors ma lunette. Il allait sans dire que «les quarante et un degrés treize minutes» ne pouvaient se rapporter qu'à l'élévation au-dessus de l'horizon visuel, puisque la direction horizontale était clairement indiquée par les mots « nord-est par nord ». Je m'orientai, à l'aide d'une boussole de poche, suivant cette dernière direction; puis, braquant ma lunette à un angle de quarante et un degrés d'élévation, autant que j'en pus juger par approximation, je cherchai, en haussant et baissant alternativement l'extrémité de mon instrument, jusqu'à ce que mon attention fût arrêtée par une sorte d'ouverture circulaire dans le feuillage d'un grand tulipier qui s'élevait, à quelque distance de là, au milieu d'un groupe d'arbres qu'il dominait de toute sa tête. Au centre de cette ouverture, j'aperçus quelque chose de blanc, dont je ne pus pas d'abord déterminer la nature; mais, ayant rajusté le foyer de ma lunette, je distinguai, en regardant de nouveau, une tête de mort.

« Cette découverte porta mon exaltation au plus haut degré: je considérai désormais le problème comme résolu; car les indications «tige principale, septième branche à l'est » ne pouvaient se rapporter qu'à la position de la tête de mort sur l'arbre, et la phrase «laisser tomber de l'œil gauche de la tête de mort» ne comportait non plus qu'une interprétation, lorsqu'il s'agissait de la recherche d'un trésor enfoui. Je compris qu'il s'agissait de laisser tomber de l'œil gauche de cette tête de mort une pierre ou tout autre corps pesant, et qu'un cordeau ou ligne droite, tendu de la partie la plus rapprochée du tronc à l'endroit où serait tombée la pierre, puis prolongé au delà jusqu'à une distance de cinquante pieds,

déterminerait un certain point, et il me parut au moins *possible* que quelque dépôt précieux eût été enfoui à cet endroit.

- Tout cela, dis-je, me semble parfaitement clair, et à la fois simple et ingénieux. Mais que fîtes vous en quittant «l'hôtel de l'évêque?» »

- Après avoir relevé avec soin la position de mon grand arbre, je revins à la maison; mais du moment où je fus hors de la «chaise du diable, » l'ouverture circulaire disparut, et j'eus beau me retourner de tous les côtés, il me fut impossible de la retrouver. Ce qu'il y a, à mon avis, de plus ingénieux dans toute l'affaire, c'est ce fait, dont je me suis assuré par des expériences réitérées, que cette étroite corniche, sur la face du rocher, est le seul point d'où l'ouverture en question soit visible.

« Dans cette expédition à « l'hôtel de l'évêque, » j'avais été accompagné par Jupiter, qui, depuis quelque temps sans doute, ayant remarqué mon air abstrait, avait grand soin de ne pas me laisser seul. Mais le lendemain matin, m'étant levé de très-bonne heure, j'échappai à sa surveillance, et je m'enfonçai dans les montagnes, à la recherche de mon arbre. Après beaucoup de peine et de fatigue, je réussis à le trouver. Quant au dénouement de l'aventure, vous le connaissez aussi bien que moi.

- Je présume, dis-je, que lors de notre première fouille, ce fut par suite de la stupidité de Jupiter, qui avait laissé tomber le scarabée par l'œil droit de la tête de mort, au lieu de l'œil gauche, que vous vous fourvoyâtes?

- Précisément. Cette bévue occasionna une différence d'environ deux pouces et demi dans la position de la cheville la plus rapprochée de l'arbre. Si le trésor eût été enfoui à l'endroit même de la chute, l'erreur eût été sans conséquence; mais cet endroit de la chute, ainsi que la partie de l'arbre la plus rapprochée, n'étaient que deux points destinés à établir une ligne de direction : l'erreur, quelque insignifiante qu'elle fût dans le principe, augmentait à mesure que cette ligne se prolongeait, et à cinquante pieds de distance, nous étions complètement fourvoyés. Sans ma ferme conviction

qu'il y avait un trésor enfoui quelque part en cet endroit, nous en aurions été probablement pour nos peines.

- Mais m'expliquerez-vous votre ton d'inspiré, et cet air solennel avec lequel vous marchiez, en faisant tournoyer votre scarabée? Je crus, pour mon compte, que vous étiez fou. Et puis, pourquoi insistâtes-vous pour que ce fût le scarabée qu'on fit tomber, au lieu d'une pierre?

- A vous parler franchement, j'étais un peu piqué des soupçons que vous laissiez entrevoir à l'endroit de mon état sanitaire, et je résolus de vous punir, mais tout tranquillement, par une innocente mystification. C'est pour cela que j'affectai de faire tournoyer mon scarabée, et c'est pour cela aussi que je voulus le faire tomber du haut de l'arbre. Une observation que vous fîtes sur sa pesanteur me suggéra d'ailleurs cette dernière idée.

- Maintenant je comprends; et il n'y a plus qu'un point qui m'embarrasse.

- Lequel?

- Ces deux squelettes trouvés dans le trou.

- Quant à cela, je n'en sais pas plus que vous. Je ne vois guère qu'une manière plausible d'expliquer ce fait, et cette explication supposerait un crime horrible. Il est évident que Kidd, si c'est bien lui qui a enfoui ce trésor, ce dont je ne doute point, il est évident, dis-je, que Kidd a dû se faire aider dans cette opération. Mais l'opération une fois terminée, il a pu juger à propos de se débarrasser de gens qui savaient son secret. Peut-être deux coups de bêche bien assénés, tandis que ses aides étaient encore occupés dans le trou, ont-ils suffi. Peut-être en a-t-il fallu davantage. Qui peut le dire? Personne. »